

INTERNATIONAL COOKERY SPECIAL

SEPTEMBER (SECOND) 2016 • ₹ 40

Woman's era

35+
DELICIOUS
DISHES



FREE VIM SACHET
WITH THIS ISSUE

— **VIM GEL** —
ONE SPOON
CLEANS A SINKFUL^Δ



^ΔAs per independent lab test. *MRP (Incl. of all taxes) for Vim liquid

115ml.

— VIM GEL —

USAGE BENEFITS

Each spoonful of Vim Gel is packed with the power of 100 lemons that cleans a sinkful of dirty utensils in a matter of minutes. Not only does it clean the toughest of grease stains from your utensils, it also gives a pleasant cleaning experience with its refreshing lemon fragrance.



NO RESIDUE

Unlike ordinary dishwash bars, Vim Gel does not leave any white residue on your utensils and makes them shine.



VALUE FOR MONEY

Just one spoonful** of Vim Gel is enough to clean one sinkful of dirty utensils^Δ.



POWER OF 100 LEMONS^^

Vim Gel cleans tough grease with ease. It also gives you a fragrant washing experience with fresh smelling utensils.



HELPS COOKWARE LOOK LIKE NEW

Unlike ordinary dishwash bars, Vim Gel does not damage your cookware's delicate surfaces and helps them look like new^Δ.

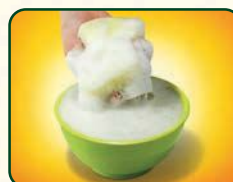
HOW TO USE



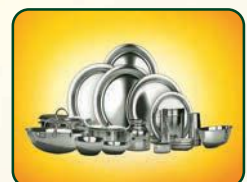
Take 1 tsp ^Δ(3.75 ml) of Vim gel



Mix it in one bowl^Δ of water (40 ml)



Dip the scrubber, squeeze to get powerful lather



Clean to get a ^Δsinkful of sparkling vessels

^ΔAs per independent lab test. ^ΔAs per consumer panel study under internal lab test conditions. ^^Power refers to the cleaning benefit of 100 lemons. **One spoonful is 3.75ml.

^ΔNo visible damage or scratch on cookware from Vim Gel usage. For scratch free cookware, use Vim Gel in combination with a soft non-abrasive scrubber.



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Woman's era

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SEPTEMBER (SECOND) 2016

Vol 43, Issue No. 1027



MIXED DELIGHTS



CONTINENTAL COOKING



Mutton Koftas

Chicken in Onion Gravy
with Sauteed Peas

Dum Aloo

Gobhi Fried

Chicken do Payaza

Chinese Sweet Sticks

Japanese Udon Noodles

Miso Soup

Italian Frittata

Thailand Rice

Mushroom Soup

The American Mac
and Cheese

Spanish Toast

French Croissant with
Ham and Cheese

LLapingachos

African Tartale

Cinnamon Loaf

French Baguette

Sandwich

Kottu From Sri Lanka

Thai Sticky Rice with
Mango

Baleadas

Arabian Swarma Roll

Mackreal with Mashed
Potatoes and Peas

Tacos

Austrlian Jaffle

Sticky Rice with Stir-fried

Veggies Burma

Thukpa from the
Himalayan Region

Naan Nebyeoh

Scott Eggs

Japnese Omelette

Singapore Rice Cake
with Radish

Nasi Lekmak from
Malaysia

Mutton Nihari

Bubble and Squeak

French Baked

Cauliflower

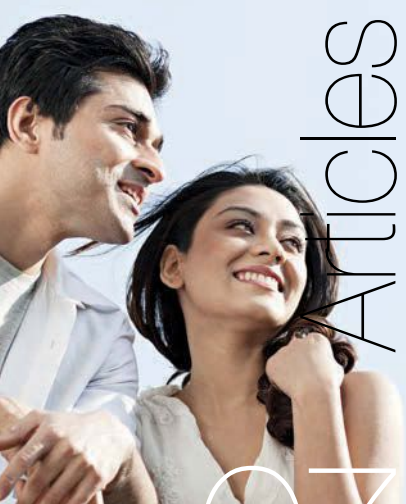
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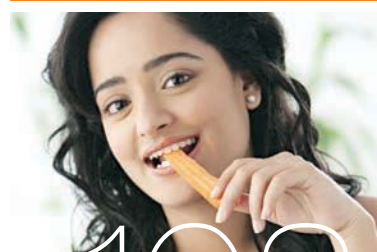
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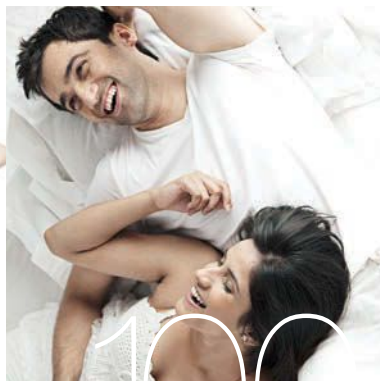
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YOUR FOOD BILLS**
Dr Kalpana Sarkar

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EDITORIAL

The Supreme Court's decision on Singur land acquisition case could have lasting impact. In its historic decision, the apex court quashed the controversial land acquisition in Singur and issued orders to restore the land with its original owners, that is, farmers.

The biggest beneficiary from Singur was Mamta Banerjee and her political outfit TMC, as they got an opportunity to cash in on farmers' unrest and

largely overlooked while benefiting a corporate house. It was also strange that Tatas continued to keep the land under their possession despite shifting their car manufacturing base out of the state. Hence, their demand for getting back the compensation from farmers was also rejected by the apex court.

Country has seen several movements and agitations against unlawful land acquisition earlier also. Singur and Nandigram became glaring examples of farmers' unrest and Left's brutality. One good outcome of Singur-type movements is that the archaic land acquisition law of 1894 was scrapped and replaced with a new law that aims to protect fertile land from greedy corporate usurptions.

The Modi Government, immediately after coming to power, tried to amend the law just to please its corporate bosses. Thankfully, the government did not succeed in its ulterior motives. Still, there are several unaddressed issues related to farmers' livelihood as well as symbiotic existence of corporate and rural sectors. These issues should better be addressed at the earliest.

MESSAGE OF SINGUR

TAMING SURROGACY

The government is trying to tame the teeming surrogacy business with a new law. In vitro fertilisation (IVF) and surrogacy techniques were invented to benefit issueless couples who are physically unable to bear a child normally. It proved a great boon for working women, especially in the western countries. Over time, owing to its misuse their governments were forced to ban surrogacy by law. But in India it continued to flourish in the absence of any regulation and has become an ideal destination for childless foreign couples which exploit techniques and services of needy surrogates available in abundance here.

The new law allows no foreign couples, NRIs, PIOs holding Indian card, same-sex couples, single parents and likes to avail surrogacy services. Besides, couples willing to avail surrogacy services must have spent a minimum of five years together and they can hire only a close relative to bear the child for them. At first glance, the new law looks very effective. But, as it happens with lots of laws, there is no guarantee that unscrupulous people will not find ways to bypass its provisions.

In fact, entire surrogacy business is running without proper auditing and mostly black money is involved. The government needs to monitor the mushrooming surrogacy clinics continuously all round the year. Otherwise, the new law may meet the same fate as various other laws have met in the past.

spread their reach to rural pockets. After capturing power Mamta Banerjee, made a law for returning land to the farmers, but her initiative got stuck in legal complications, as the Calcutta High Court termed that law unconstitutional. Now, the Supreme Court has repealed the high court's order.

The apex court has held that the land acquisition was illegal as proper procedures were not followed and farmers' claims and objections were

SHAMEFUL ACT

It is said that a picture speaks louder than thousand words. Recent leak of CD pertaining to a Delhi government minister (now ex-) and his subsequent removal from the cabinet are really very disturbing. It also tells about the extent to which a person can go in misusing power and also the level to which he could fall.

Misuse of power and downfall of political leaders are not new in politics. More often than not, culprits manage to hide their extramarital affairs from their spouses as well as from prying media. But the minister in the current episode, who held the important portfolio of woman and child development and social welfare, was not that lucky. What a paradox? Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) has evolved from anti-corruption movement and regards honesty and piety as its talisman to stay in public life. Sacked minister Sandeep Kumar is an advocate by profession and the only Dalit face in

the cabinet. Today, when issues related to women and Dalits are taken with due sensitivity, actions of a minister responsible for women's welfare raise big questions about morality in public life. Interestingly, the same minister had claimed on International Women's Day this year that he touches his wife's feet every day after waking up in the morning.

Do the video clippings in the CD hint about some bigger underlying scandals? Only thorough forensic investigation of its contents will tell the truth. If there is any truth in the present revelations, then one can imagine how many times the minister has enjoyed intimacy with how many women. His actions have brought loads of shame for his party that stands for upright principles and values in public life. The only good thing is that they did not dismiss this entire episode as plot by opposition parties and took immediate action against the womaniser minister.

write to: editor@womansera.com 

MARRIAGE WORKS if you do

And doesn't if you don't. By I. M. Soni

A happy marriage requires an investment of time and energy, patience and tact. Good marriages don't just happen. We grow up believing that love is magical and ultimately, beyond our control. We don't decide to love – we fall in love and then fail in it.

But something is needed if love's rewards are to be relished. First, we must pay close enough attention to our loved one to understand his or her desires. Secondly, we must act.

Marriages are never static; they are either growing or are in decline.

Happy couples know that their love is their own responsibility, not of their stars.

Love is not easily destroyed. Almost all wedded couples secretly fear that their marriage will stagnate and wither. Yet, love rarely dies. It only seems absent because other feelings have been allowed to replace it.

When bad things happen in a marriage, both partners need to protect themselves. They fear rejection and withdraw behind masks of indifference. Couples with good marriages understand, however, that after the storm, the calm will return. Realising this, they are able to survive the crisis that breaks other marriages apart.

To put this maxim into action, try to pause during a marital disagreement and remember what you felt for your partner at the beginning. Allow your love to override the feelings for the moment.

Marriage is not a cure-all. The rewards of marriage are so highly praised that we come to believe it is the antidote to old wounds. But marriage is not a solution to personal problems. No matter how close your marriage, you and your spouse are 'persons' before you are a couple.

When we expect a mate to bolster our ego or



compensate for our weaknesses, we are disappointed, and our loved one feels resentful.

The happiest couples know that for a marriage to last, both partners must first learn to love themselves. Otherwise, they will never feel worthy of the other person's love.

Love is acceptance. Too often, we believe that love gives us control. We try to smooth out our spouse's rough spots – even though in doing so we may diminish the very qualities of that person. It won't work. Even when a mate seems compliant, he or she will unconsciously resist the pressure to change or conform. Certainly, problems should be solved if they are

herself known. When you tell your spouse what you need and he or she responds to that request, that is the genuine indication of love.

Marriages are always changing. Most of us believe that a solid union is one that does not alter from year to year. The truth is change occurs and individuals adapt. Couples who encounter the most difficulties are those who resist change and fear that their love may not be strong enough to survive.

Enduring relationships have the flexibility to accept change with acceptance and a positive attitude. Believe that the love is strong enough, and the trust great enough

damage love. Marriage is like a pair of scissors which cuts anything that comes between the two blades.

Before marriage we take life's lumps in our stride. If things go well, we feel it is because we made the right choice. Then we marry. If we are not careful, we begin making our partner the focus of blame, "If I'm unhappy, it's because of you."

Spouses are the most convenient scapegoats. It is easier to find fault with what he or she is doing than to examine how we have created our own unhappiness. Such blame is not only unjust but self-defeating for it reinforces a sense of personal passivity. Avoid trap-blaming. Assume a more affirmative posture in marriage. The more responsibility you assume for the quality of your lives, the happier the partners become.

NEED FOR BALANCE

Although love requires a balance between giving and receiving, spontaneous unselfishness is the essence of love. Real love asks that we put our own needs on hold and respond to our mates. Often, in fact, we feel much more "in love" when we are actively giving to our partner than we do when we are receiving.

Giving is contagious. It encourages reciprocity. A word of caution, however. Don't give to get, for that isn't love. The happiest marriages are those in which both give 100 per cent and receive 100 per cent in return.

All couples disappoint each other at times. One of two things then happen. Either they forgive or slowly accumulate resentment. For love to last, one must be able to forgive. Simply shelving feeling, or putting them out of mind, is not forgiveness. Nor is explaining away the other person's behaviour. Forgiving is genuine, voluntary release of anger and hurt. And it is necessary in order for the marital union to flourish. The most important rule is to behave in ways that enhance your own self-worth, dignity and integrity.

We

We love life, not because we are used to living but because we are used to loving.

making life intolerable. But it may be worthwhile to reconsider the phrase "for better or worse".

WHAT LOVE MEANS

Love means accepting your partner's flaws. Understand that a person's desire to change grows out of a sense of being accepted just as he or she is.

One of the fantasies of love is that our mate is somehow tuned in to our innermost thoughts and dreams. When our spouse fails to anticipate these, we feel disappointed.

But it is simply unreasonable to expect your mate to always know what's on our mind. Men and women who feel understood by their partners know that, ultimately, each is responsible for making himself or

BEFORE MARRIAGE WE TAKE LIFE'S LUMPS IN OUR STRIDE. IF THINGS GO WELL, WE FEEL IT IS BECAUSE WE MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE.

THEN WE MARRY. IF WE ARE NOT CAREFUL, WE BEGIN MAKING OUR PARTNER THE FOCUS OF BLAME, "IF I'M UNHAPPY, IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU."

to allow each other respect, latitude and space to grow.

"What my spouse doesn't know can't hurt" is a flimsy rationale for an affair. Even if it doesn't lead to divorce, an affair can permanently





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NEWS IN PICTURES

Italian actress Sonia Bergamasco poses during a photocall on the beach on 30 August in Venice on the eve of the opening of the 73rd Venice Film Festival at Venice Lido. Sonia will host the opening and closing ceremonies of the festival.



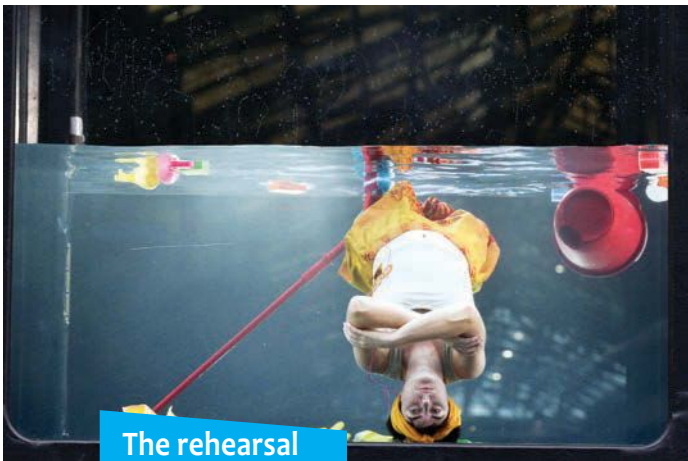
Photocall

Performance



Britney Spears performs on stage during the 2016 MTV Video Music Awards ceremony at Madison Square Garden on 28 August in New York City.

The rehearsal



A performer from the US-based company Early Morning Opera struggles to perform daily routines inside a 13-foot tank during the rehearsal of Holoscenes as part of the London's Burning festival of events commemorating 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London on 31 August.

View of a mural of Mexican artist Israel Zuniga painted on the roof of a building at a poor neighbourhood in Ecatepec, Mexico on 25 August. Dozens of murals were painted on buildings in a poor neighbourhood in Ecatepec on the route of a new cable car that will run this year.



Murals for new cable car



Dance show

Sophie Beem performs with her dancers during Arhut Ashe Kids' Day prior to the start of the 2016 US Open at USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center on 27 August in New York City.



In remembrance

Final touches are given to a 120 metre-long wooden sculpture of London's skyline from the seventeenth century as it is moored up on the river Thames in London on 30 August. The sculpture titled London 1666 and designed by David Best was ceremonially lit and burnt in the middle of the Thames on 4 September as part of celebrations to commemorate the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London.

Alphorn players give a concert on 28 August in Nesselwang, southern Germany, during a mass performance of 300 alphorn blowers.



An art installation

This is an art installation entitled Louis Vuitton Shop Window Display by Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, part of the Infinity Art Exhibition presented at the Moderna Museet, the Museum of Modern Art.



A concert



DEPTH IN

DIVERSITY

Depends on your breadth of outlook.

By Kalpana M Naghnoor

Let me introduce you to a word, xenophile. It means a person who loves other cultures. I never did understand my own curiosity and affinity for different faiths and practices until I chanced upon this word when I was in high school, and it was at that point that I realised the single word to describe my own nature.

This curiosity and appreciation for other cultures just fluidly slides away those walls we build into our perceptions. Once the walls slide away, we can then see the desert sands and the practices of those people, their foods, and their practising faith. We can see the stretch of the Mediterranean Sea, its blue waters and the countries it skirts, the Italian *pasta* to the Spanish *paella*. We must love and respect the culture

we are born into and remember that standpoint holds good for others.

Perhaps this xenophile nature of mine is the reason that I married out of my religion. I married into a Muslim family, while I came from a Hindu, Tamil family. So, in my household, you will hear a mixture of Kannada as my husband Mansoor hails from Bengaluru, like I do, as well as Urdu, and there is, of course, Tamil and English as the main communicating language between the families, his and mine!

Believe me, life has been easier for me, than it would have been, had I married into a Hindu Tamil family. I would have been ridden with tradition, which may not have been to my liking. So what happened was that Mansoor and I decided to keep our faiths, we registered our marriage in

the presence of family and friends in the court hall, and then our parents held a nice reception at the Taj West End 30 years ago.

We have had our share of troubles, but not one of them was a religious concern. I can very proudly say that my in-laws valued my opinion most, relied on my judgement and valued me as a person. So why am I sharing all this with the reader? Like I said, my life was easier. I had no traditional boundaries to follow, while I followed every valued tradition of the family. For which my in-laws cherished me. I made a few changes, which they welcomed as a relief and made them proud. I follow Hinduism, so my in-laws joined me for all the *pujas*.

One year, Ramazan – Id-UI Fitr, and Ganesh Chathurthi fell on the same day. I was in a quandary about how to

go about it. If I brought home a Ganesh, like I do every year, we could not cook non-vegetarian food. But how does one celebrate Ramazan without *biryani*? My mother was of the opinion that I should not bring home the Ganesh, and skip the festival that year, but my in-laws insisted I keep the Ganesh and the *biryani* be vegetarian. So we celebrated Ramazan with a vegetarian feast! Life can be simple and accommodative. These are cherished moments in a person's life, when shared, it reflects a life which most aspire to lead. The following day, I immersed the Ganesh and that very evening, I prepared a nice non-veg feast for my in-laws.

APPRECIATING OTHER CULTURES

I am not espousing mixed marriages and all else, because to do that one needs strength. All I am saying is appreciating another's culture will widen our own horizons. There is always something to learn, in the form of a significance, and the wisdom in it, like Christians always donate to the needy around Christmas, then you learn Muslims too do the same thing around Ramazan, likewise Hindus too during Diwali. So, unless we open ourselves to other cultures, we cannot see the sameness or the vibrant variety in other cultures.

There is a festival among us, called Poov Adakari. It falls a day after Pongal. It is a non-vegetarian feast, remembering the elders who are no more. Yes, there is so much diversity in Hinduism that some communities do have non-vegetarian feasts! So on that day we make around five non-vegetarian dishes. Every family which celebrates this festival has its set menu. We make *diyas* from the dough of rice flour and jaggery, spiced with nutmeg and cardamom. We shape this dough into the shape of *diyas*, light it with a wick and the medium used is *ghee*. This makes the *puja* so pretty, one *diya* for each member of the family. This *diya* is edible and very tasty, especially the browned parts



Poov Adakari festival.

**I AM NOT ESPOUSING
MIXED MARRIAGES
AND ALL ELSE,
BECAUSE TO DO THAT
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ALL I AM SAYING IS
APPRECIATING
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WILL WIDEN OUR OWN
HORIZONS.**

from the burning of the wick. But we also make a *dal* and a spinach dish of drumstick leaves. Now, to source drumstick leaves is a problem, but we manage.

So, on the day, I found it very difficult to source the drumstick leaves. While I was hunting, going from one green-grocer to another, my cook Hammid made the *diyas*, and shaped them so beautifully that I was spared the job when I returned with the drumstick-leaves! Hammid was so happy to make the *diyas* and proud to have made them so well. See, life can be simple and inclusive if one wishes. Truly in our family we cannot see these religious boundaries, even if we want to. Likewise, in life too we can be inclusive of our friends and others to lead a happy life in society.

The more evolved the mind, the less restrictive it becomes. Our horizons widen, like when we travel to foreign countries. We learn a

plethora of cultural as well as traditional values. We learn the ways others have developed and make a lesson of it if it better our lifestyle and yet make a lesson of gratitude if we have steered outside of a practice for our cultural benefit. But how can one know without understanding other cultures and their intrinsic values? Believe me, I have raised a family with two values and they have harmonised so effectively and beautifully that we are appreciated by others.

AN UNCERTAIN CALM

I have broached this subject because we as a society have reached an uncertain calm where religion is concerned. We have become wary of each other, and the subject itself has become a sensitive issue.

Also armchair philosophy is easy to preach, but to live a harmonious life between two faiths like I have done and to speak with conviction, makes for a better article and more convincing.

Hence, I felt I should share my positive views with the reader. *Woman's Era* always carries articles of conviction and good value, to that, here is my contribution, which is first hand.

We

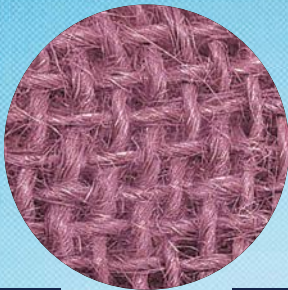
A friend is someone who gives you total freedom to be yourself. — Jim Morrison

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UNEXPECTED JUSTICE

A fast-paced story of a heroic lawyer. By A. Sarala

"Who are you? What are you doing here?" In answer, the girl cried and almost whispered, "Are you going to rape me at gunpoint?" Jayaram was shocked and ashamed. She was no ghost, only a cute human being in distress. He quickly returned his revolver to the holster.

Jayaram, will you not attend my birthday? Bhasker asked over the phone. "I am busy," Jayaram replied. "I understand. But, I have a surprise for you, my friend," Bhasker lured him.

"What surprise?"

"A surprise is a surprise... will not be told in advance," he smiled.

"I shall attend and see for myself what that surprise is," Jayaram put down his phone.

Mothkur was around 200-odd kilometres from the city and Bhasker was living there since he was born. He settled himself at that place, running a big medical shop. He was his best friend from his childhood and they often met either in the city or in his place.

Jayaram wound up his work in the office, freshened himself and took out his

brand new wine-red S-Cross from the garage. He made a quick shopping of some soft drinks, snacks, mineral water bottles besides a sandalwood turkey towel and a few other items. As it was the rainy season, he took his waterproof jacket, cap and an umbrella. As the road was good, he could cover the distance in three and half hours. He was careful and always let the weird and mad drivers overtake him, victory and pride writ large on their faces.

He drove a hundred kilometres and it began to drizzle. He found a diversion from the freeway as a bridge was being constructed. He

descended to the makeshift road and slowly moved. The rain now poured. The windshield wipers swept the rain water vigorously but fog began to accumulate resulting in poor visibility. He drove 10 minutes with difficulty and stopped near an old building on the roadside. The birthday function was on the next day and he could hang out for the night in a hotel in Mothkur, he thought.

It was 9.30 pm. Jayaram disembarked from the car and climbed the steps of the old building. Watching the torrential rain, he passed his eyes on the corner of the building. In the bright light of the lightning, he noticed a fluttering sari. He was told that at such godforsaken places in the village, ghosts appear. Jayaram was intrepid. He slowly

"Auntie, what's the name of the lawyer?" he asked in the end.

"Somesesh Kumar," she said gritting her teeth.

"Will you trust me? I will set things right. I am a criminal lawyer and I will take up the case of Alekhya only to win and bring it to justice," he announced.



Rajesh na

walked to the area, took out his flashlight and focused. He found a young girl crouched there. His mind went to the ghost stories he had heard. He instantly whipped out his revolver and pointed to her, "Who are you? What are you doing here?"

In answer, the girl cried and almost whispered, "Are you going to rape me at gunpoint?"

Jayaram was shocked and ashamed. She was no ghost, only a cute human being in distress. He quickly returned his revolver to the holster.

"What nonsense you are uttering?" he said aloud.

She was shivering as she was wet all over. A small Rexene travel bag was lying beside her. She was around 25 years old, with a good complexion. She wore a light blue sari with yellow flowers. She had no ornaments except a watch on her left wrist. She had hazel eyes with a small nose and mouth.

"I am scared," she replied.

"What are you doing here at this hour?" Jayaram asked her as if she was a child.

"I am stranded. I was returning from my friend's house after a function and the last bus did not turn up," she picked up courage.

"Where do you live?"

"Monapur."

"How far is it from here?"

"About 60 kilometres."

"It is not safe to be here. I will drop you at your house in my car and proceed to Mothkur. Will you come with me?"

She looked into his eyes. She trusted him.

"Yes," she said.

"Change into warm clothing. I shall go and bring the umbrella," he said and swiftly moved to the car.

He returned after 15

minutes with an empty plastic bag. He put the wet clothes in that, picked up the bag and handed over the umbrella to her. She walked behind him like a lamb. He opened the rear door and asked her to get in. He soon passed on the new towel to her.

They sat there for 10 minutes and Jayaram and she had snacks and coffee from the flask.

"I'm Jayaram and from the city. What's your name?" he broke the silence between them.

"Alekhya, employed as a teacher in the village," she responded.

The lawyer, whom Alekhya engaged, colluded with the defence lawyer and also promised the MLA and the ACP that he would see that the case filed by the victim did not win. He not only dragged the case viciously but also squeezed the hapless family for money.

"What's your father?"

"He is no more. I have my mother who looks after me," she had tears in her eyes which he noticed in the mirror.

"Sorry..."

He drove in silence and reached the village in one and half hours.

There was no electricity. For a few drops of rain the electricity promptly goes generally and returns. When it rains cats and dogs it would never return.

Alekhya's mother opened the door and Jayaram could

see tears in her eyes.

"I was worried about you," she said.

"He rescued me," Alekhya told her pointing to Jayaram who was bringing her bags.

"Please come in, sir," she said.

"I will have to go," he announced.

The rain again started with a vengeance.

"It is unsafe. Please stay tonight," Alekhya's mother pleaded.

"Please Jayaram sir," Alekhya also requested.

Jayaram went back and brought his duffel bag. Alekhya's mother prepared a simple dinner.

Alekhya arranged a bed for him and went in.

Alekhya's mother enquired about Jayaram who said that he was alone with his parents perishing in a plane crash several years ago. He had the ancestral property which he was looking after.

"I'm sorry," she said and cried.

"Fate," he smiled.

"Yes, fate it only saddens the humans," she said.

"Why are you so sad?" he asked inquisitively. There must be something that happened to them.

She began to narrate the story as Alekhya had already drifted into sleep in her room.

One year ago Alekhya was returning from her school. She was kidnapped. They gagged her and took her to the hillock and raped her. They were planning for a long time and were successful. Badri was the son of Srinivas Chauhan, the ACP and Shakti was the son of the local MLA, Dakshina Murty. Both were vagabonds having discontinued their studies

and just roamed. Their dads lost control over them but supported their actions in street fights, scaring people. Two farmers who were ploughing the field with their tractors witnessed the horrendous crime. They had the greatest respect for the victim as their children were studying in the school. With great difficulty the FIR was lodged and she was sent for medical examination.

The lawyer, whom Alekhya engaged, colluded with the defence lawyer and also promised the MLA and the ACP that he would see that the case filed by the victim did not win. He not only dragged the case viciously but also squeezed the hapless family for money. Alekhya and her mother sold the gold ornaments and paid him in the aggregate ₹40,000. There was thus no hope in the vicinity. The justice was still hanging in the balance regardless of the genuineness and truth.

Now, it was clear to Jayaram why the girl talked about being raped. He felt very bad that such a lady had to suffer in the hands of the law.

He gave a patient listening to Alekhya's mother. He turned emotional.

"Auntie, what's the name of the lawyer?" he asked in the end.

"Somesh Kumar," she said gritting her teeth.

"Will you trust me? I will set things right. I am a criminal lawyer and I will take up the case of Alekhya only to win and bring it to justice," he announced.

"Thank you, Jayaram but now we are left with no money... we want to

withdraw the case and live on our own," she lamented.

"Please listen to me. I will attend my friend's birthday tomorrow and return. You will be coming with me and staying in my house till the case is over. I have a cook, a servant and a driver. Forget about money. Be with me, that's all," he was emphatic.

"Won't we be a burden to you?" she said with tears.

"No. What am I going to do with so much of money and property? Yours is a genuine case to be fought tooth and nail and won."

"As you suggest," she agreed.

"Auntie, it is past midnight. Have a nice sleep. Everything is going to be all right. I will be leaving early tomorrow. Please brief Alekhya," he said and went to sleep.

It struck 8 am but it was dark. Still it was raining but not with the velocity Jayaram experienced last night. He opened his eyes.

"Good morning, sir," Alekhya wished. She was fresh as a flower. She smiled. He was sure her mother would have briefed her.

"Here is your coffee," she said.

"Good morning, Alekhya. Thank you," he responded.

After finishing the coffee, he readied himself.

"Alekhya, you resign your job and pack up. We will go and I will send my driver to bring everything. Here is some money. Please pay off to everyone. Say goodbye to this village," he said in one breath.

She nodded with tears in her eyes.

"No, please. Be bold. Everything is going to be all right," he involuntarily tapped her back.

Bhasker was pleased to see him. "But for the surprise, you would not have turned up," he said.

"Your guess is correct," Jayaram smiled.

A beautiful lady came out of the kitchen along with his mother. "She is Rama Mathur, my fiancée," he introduced.

"Congratulations," Jayaram said. He was very happy.

The birthday party was over at 7.30 pm. Jayaram excused himself and headed for Monapur. There was no rain.

He picked up Alekhya and her mother and reached the city.

He told everyone at home that they were his distant relatives and would stay to fight a case in the court.

Jayaram took the case file

from Somesh Kumar and the case progressed. The two witnesses were given protection and they deposed.

Jayaram was a famous criminal lawyer and had won a number of cases. He wielded influence with him the police and the judges for his sincerity and intelligence.

Six months passed and a final hearing was given. Alekhya won the case and the rapists were given a term of seven years' rigorous imprisonment.

Badri and Shakti were promptly put behind bars much to the chagrin of Dakshina Murty and Srinivas Chauhan. They were to make an appeal to a higher court.

Alekhya hugged Jayaram in the court and cried till her tears dried.

They reached home and conveyed the good news to her mother.

"For what we came for is over. Thank you for all you have done to us. We must be going to eke out a living," she said.

Before he could answer her, the club secretary phoned up to join a party of lawyers.

Jayaram quickly dressed himself and left for the club.

Alekhya followed him to the car.

Jayaram's lawyer friends congratulated him and they had dinner. By the time he left for home, it was past midnight.

When Jayaram was about to get into the car, the SP telephoned him and informed him that Badri and Shakti had escaped from the jail. It was not easy unless someone influential and powerful helped them.

There were no vehicles on the road at that hour. When Jayaram neared a park, a Scorpio overtook him and stopped in front of his car.

Badri and Shakti got out of the van and began to indiscriminately shoot at the S-Cross. Jayaram ducked in time to dodge bullets. When he opened his door and came out, two bullets pierced his right shoulder. He slumped to the ground. Both the assailants came near him. Jayaram lost no time in drawing his revolver and put bullets between their eyes in quick succession. They fell like a tree.

Jayaram took his cell and phoned up the SP and informed him that he was shot at the park near the club. As there was heavy bleeding from the gunshot wound, he swooned.

In less than 15 minutes a posse of policemen arrived along with the ambulance

"Alekhya, I love you. Have you decided to go or will you be my wife?" he asked. She came running and hugged him.



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Zindagi ke saath bhi, Zindagi ke baad bhi.

with doctors. Jayaram was shifted to the Corporate Hospital. The police took stock of the situation.

Alekhya, who was waiting for Jayaram at his house, received a call from the hospital.

"Madam, Jayaram had an accident and he is in the Corporate Hospital. He is under treatment and out of danger," the hospital authorities informed her.

Tears streamed from the eyes of Alekhya. She woke up her mother and all landed in the hospital. Jayaram was in the ICU. He was not in his senses. They had a look at him through the glass door.

Jayaram regained consciousness after two days.

Badri and Shakti got out of the van and began to indiscriminately shoot at the S-Cross. Jayaram ducked in time to dodge bullets. When he opened his door and came out, two bullets pierced his right shoulder. He slumped to the ground.

He asked for Alekhya who was let in.

"How are you, Jayaram?" she said tears in her eyes.

He wiped her tears with his left hand.

"It's all on account of me," she said again.

He smiled. The doctor entered, "Madam, let him have some rest. We have taken out two bullets from his shoulder."

She departed only to inform her mother and others that he was responding to the treatment and was able to talk.

Jayaram was discharged after a week. A doctor visited him daily and changed the bandage and administered injections. Alekhya took personal care of him. The attachment grew and she loved him.

Within two weeks, he was almost normal, though he did not take up any case.

"Will you now permit us to leave?" Alekhya's mother asked.

He looked at Alekhya.

She was silent.

"Alekhaya, I love you. Have you decided to go or will you be my wife?" he asked.

She came running and hugged him.

"I will be your wife," she whispered.

An unexpected justice was done to Alekhya, which in such cases is but rare.

In a week, they all attended the wedding of Bhasker and Alekhya Vandanam at Mothkur.

"Surprise returned," Jayaram said to Bhasker bending over him.

We

Friends show their love in times of trouble, not in happiness. — Euripides

A trip through my archives of love

A trip through my archives of love...
I opened my heart and strolled
Through its dusty room of archives,
Opened and dusted the scrolls,
And waded through my old memories.
A range of emotions
Surged through my mind,
While I took this trip
Down memory lane.

Darling, I found
That the fragrance of love,
Was still so fresh in a few.
I could feel the flowers,
Still caress me,
The flowers that had caressed us,
While we discovered our garden.

We knew every flower,
And every shrub in every corner,
That we had watered together
with love.

Such was the intensity
That I find it difficult to believe,
It was you,
Because you left me soon,
All alone in a garden of loneliness.
Yes, now I get the stench of blood
From those fine etchings of denial
That you had inscribed with thorns,
Deep in my heart.

And here are a few scrolls,
All soaked in lust,

A lust that had made me weak,
When the cruel discovery
That I was not the only bird
Nesting in your garden,
Had hit me hard.
And now those predatory images
Of the licentious animal inside you,
Inundate my mind to its brim.
Did you realise that time,
That you were running the thorns,
Again through the same wounds?
Did your eyes spot
That it had then made the etchings
Deeper and more painful in my
heart?

— Roy Cherian Cherukarayil.



Celebrating the Guinness World Records

The Ryan International Group of Institutions was recently recognized for its efforts for charity by none other than the GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS. The Group's school in Sharjah received this accolade for participating in the world's largest charity donation for the poor. The students collected over 295,122 items of clothing for donation. This was verified by the authorities of Guinness World Records and was declared as a record.

The Ryan International Group of Institutions lays a strong emphasis on developing holistic individuals and ensures that all its students from their early years and throughout their schooling are nurtured with good values, morals and ethics. Under the visionary leadership of Dr. A. F. Pinto, Chairman and Madam Grace Pinto, MD, the Ryan Group has undertaken several remarkable charity initiatives in support of society, reaching out to the underprivileged, poor and needy and also to inculcate a sense of social responsibility amongst the students.

The participation from the students was overwhelming and spontaneous. The student community, including the younger ones, were keenly aware of many social issues and participated in the event joyfully. Children identified with the cause and wanted to make a difference. It was a proud moment when the Ryan Group's school in Sharjah, UAE was recognised by



Young Ryanites making their contribution to the cause of charity

the Guinness World Records for their outstanding achievement of participating in the world's largest charity donation towards the poor. The Guinness World Records officially congratulated the Ryan School and presented the Certificate of Recognition at Burj Khalifa in Dubai.

Speaking on this achievement, Madam Grace Pinto said, "We are grateful for the vision that Lord Jesus Christ has given us to nurture responsible and compassionate future citizens of the world. We will continue our efforts of imbibing humane values among our students."

Dine with a Light Eater

Don't copy what others do at the table. By Mala Ashok

Have you tried all means of losing weight – or at least not putting on weight – yet you seem unable to do so? What is wrong with your eating habits? Well, you may not be entirely responsible for this.

If you examine what you eat, it is quite likely that you will notice that you eat a lot sometimes and just peck at salads at other times. Look deeper and you may find that you are influenced by the person you're dining with, and if they're light eaters, you'll follow suit.

When your dining companion eats smaller portions, you will cut your food intake and eat less than you would if you were alone, researchers out of the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia, have found.

This phenomenon is called "social modelling" and it happens to us when we're in social situations. We lose sight of our own hunger and feelings of fullness and look to others' plates for cues. What is interesting is that this behaviour is independent of the body weight of those whose plates we're eyeing.

The UNSW researchers analysed 38 previous studies done on eating in social situations, and found similar outcomes with both healthy and unhealthy snack foods and during meals. In some studies, the study participants had even been deprived of food for up to a day and were therefore presumably very hungry.

MIMICKED

Remarkably, study subjects even mimicked light eaters when the dining companion wasn't present and subjects were simply given a written indication of what that other person ate, the lead author, an associate professor at the UNSW School of Psychology, said in a statement.

Women subjects were more likely to set their limits according to others; although researchers did note that their male university-student subjects were big fans of free meals and may

have skewed the results a little! And older children behaved more like adults than younger children, suggesting that this copy-cat eating is a learned behaviour.

And what happened when the "models" filled their plates instead? In this case, study subjects were not quite as impressionable; they felt free to eat a lot or to stop at their typical threshold. These findings build on a booming area of research into the psychology of eating. In addition to well-known factors such as plate size (smaller is better), there's new evidence to suggest, for example, that we eat more when watching action movies and drama and that kids will eat more fruits and veggies when recess is before lunch.

Knowledge is power – at the table, at least. Use this knowledge to your advantage and choose your dinner partners carefully.

We





&
Woman's era

Present

Mixed Delights



Mutton koftas



Chicken in onion gravy with sautéed peas



Dum aloo



Gobhi fried



Chicken do payaza



Mutton koftas

MUTTON KOFTAS

Try these koftas in a rich onion and tomato gravy.

INGREDIENTS:

300 gm mutton koftas

1/2 cup oil

1/2 cup browned and fried onions

2 tsp ginger-garlic paste

1/2 cup tomato puree

1 tsp roasted jeera powder

1 tbsp coriander powder

1 tsp haldi powder

1/2 tsp red chilli powder

salt to taste

METHOD

Heat the oil and add the browned onions and the ginger-garlic paste. Stir-fry till the onions and paste look golden brown. Lower the heat and mix in the

tomato puree and the spices. Fry for 2 minutes and then mix in the koftas.

Continue to stir and fry over low heat for a few minutes. Add 2 cups of water, salt to taste and allow the gravy to simmer, covering with a lid.

Let the gravy thicken slightly and then serve with rotis or steamed rice.



**MUTTON KOFTAS ARE REALLY FILLING,
JUST ONE SPOONFUL OF VIM GEL
WILL DO ALL THE CLEANING**



*MRP (incl. of all taxes) for Vim liquid 115ml.



Chicken in onion gravy with sautéed peas

CHICKEN IN ONION GRAVY WITH SAUTÉED PEAS

INGREDIENTS:

400 gm boneless chicken
2 cups oil
2 cups onions
3 tsp ginger-garlic paste
1 tsp jeera roasted powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp annar dana powder
1 tbsp coriander powder

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp haldi powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp red chilli powder
salt to taste

For peas:

1 cup shelled peas
3 tsp oil
salt to taste

METHOD

Prepare the peas by heating the oil and add the peas, adding salt to taste. Fry the peas for 2-3 minutes till tender but not overcooked.

Heat the oil and add the boneless chicken and fry on low

heat, turning all the time so that all the sides of the chicken pieces are browned. Add salt to taste and mix well. Mix in the onion paste and other pastes and continue to cook over low heat mixing from time to time. Cook till the onions are browned. Add the spices and mix well. Add one cup of water and cover with a lid and cook on low fire till the chicken pieces are tender and the preparation is dry. Garnish with the sautéed peas and serve.



**GREASY CHICKEN ONION GRAVY IN YOUR DISH,
JUST ONE SPOONFUL OF VIM GEL
CLEANS WITHOUT A BLEMISH**



*MRP (incl. of all taxes) for Vim liquid 115ml.



Dum aloo

DUM ALOO

Dum aloo makes the humble potato rich and tasty when made with a little extra oil.

INGREDIENTS:

400 gm small potatoes but not very tiny
2 cups oil
2 cups onions
3 tsp ginger-garlic paste
1 tsp jeera roasted powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp annar dana powder

1 tbsp coriander powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp haldi powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp red chilli powder
3 tbsp tomato puree
salt to taste

METHOD

Boil the potatoes in salted water till tender but not overcooked. Peel and sprinkle salt and keep aside. Heat the oil and add the potatoes and fry over low heat, turning once or twice till the

potatoes are light golden brown in colour. Mix in the onion and ginger-garlic paste and continue to fry over low heat, turning once or twice till the onions are browned. Add the spices and tomato puree and continue to stir and fry, adding 2 tbsp of water and cover with a lid. Cook on low fire with the lid covered till the potatoes are tender and have the onion paste and spices mixed well into the potatoes.



**DUM ALOO CAN BE REALLY DELICIOUS,
JUST ONE SPOONFUL OF VIM GEL
MAKES YOUR WORK LESS TEDIOUS**



*MRP (incl. of all taxes) for Vim liquid

115ml.



Gobhi fried

GOBHI FRIED

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 big head cauliflower
- 2 potatoes peeled and cut into pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp haldi powder
- 2 cups oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic paste
- 1 tsp roasted jeera powder
- 2 tbsp coriander powder
- salt to taste

METHOD

Cut the cauliflower head into small florets. Peel the potatoes and cut into strips. Wash the veggies and drain out all the water and sprinkle salt and haldi powder and keep aside for 10 minutes. Heat the oil and add all the cauliflower and potato pieces. Fry over medium heat, covering with a lid.

Remove the lid and stir and fry

till the veggies are golden in colour. Mix in the spice and garlic paste and continue to stir and fry till the preparation is dry and all the oil has been absorbed into the veggies.

The preparation will be fried and dry. Do not add any water since the veggies will cook in the excessive oil which is being used. Serve with rotis.



**GOBHI FRIED IS REALLY APPEALING,
JUST ONE SPOONFUL OF VIM GEL
IS ENOUGH FOR ALL THE CLEANING**



*MRP (incl. of all taxes) for Vim liquid 115ml.



Chicken do payaza

CHICKEN DO PAYAZA

This chicken preparation with lots of onions and a little extra oil tastes good and is easy to prepare in minutes.

INGREDIENTS:

400 gm chicken breast pieces
(with bones)

2 cups oil
2 cups browned onions
2 cups onions chopped or sliced
2 tbsp tomato puree
2 tsp ginger-garlic paste
1 tsp roasted jeera powder
2 tsp curry powder
1/2 tsp red chilli powder

METHOD

Heat the oil and fry the chicken pieces till light golden brown in colour.

Add salt to taste. Continue to cook on low fire, adding the browned onions and chopped onions and mix and stir till the onions are translucent.

Add the spices and tomato puree. Continue to stir and cook on low fire, stirring all the time. Add 2 cups of water and cover with a lid and cook till the chicken pieces are tender.

Serve with rotis.

We



**CHICKEN DO PYAZA IS REALLY TASTY,
JUST ONE SPOONFUL OF VIM GEL
MAKES GREASE REMOVAL REALLY EASY**



*MRP (incl. of all taxes) for Vim liquid

115ml.

**WHATEVER THE RECIPE MAY BE,
ALL YOU NEED TO CLEAN IT'S
TOUGH GREASE IS JUST
ONE SPOONFUL OF VIM GEL**



*MRP (Incl. of all taxes) for Vim Liquid **115ml.**



Prepare some mouth-watering food.

By Roma Ghosh

CHINESE SWEET STICKS

INGREDIENTS:

200 gm high protein flour around 1 1/2 cup

4 gm yeast

2 tsp baking soda

2 tsp sugar

3 tbsp milk

4 cups oil for deep-frying

1 tsp salt

METHOD

Sift together the flour and the baking soda and sugar with flour. Then melt the yeast with milk. Pour the milk into the flour slowly. Knead the flour into smooth and soft dough. Cover and place in warm place for fermentation.

When the dough doubles in size, spread some flour and knead it to soft dough again. Cover and ferment again for 15-20 minutes more.

Brush some oil on your board, and then roll the dough into a wide stripe around 5-8 cm long. Cut the log into small facets around 1 cm in diameter. Overlay one facet with another one. Press one small indentation in the centre with a chop stick.

Heat up oil in a pan or kadhai and then twist the bread stick slightly just before deep-frying till crispy and golden brown. Fry a few at a time on low fire to get the crispy flavour. Alternately try baking in the oven.

Chinese sweet sticks



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JAPANESE UDON NOODLES

INGREDIENTS:

200 gm udon noodles
2 tbsp olive oil
2 cups sauted vegetables like pumpkin, shredded spinach, brinjals
tofu – optional
2 tsp soya sauce
salt to taste

METHOD

Boil the noodles in salted water till just done but not overboiled. Blanch the vegetables in water till just tender and then add to the oil and fry for 30 seconds. Mix in the noodles and soya sauce and stir gently. Serve with an additional portion of soya sauce.

MISO SOUP

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups vegetable stock
3 green onions, thinly sliced
2 cups kale thinly chopped
2 cups firm tofu diced
3 tbsp miso
salt to taste

METHOD

Put the vegetable broth in a pot set to medium high heat and bring to boil. Reduce heat to low and

Japanese udon noodles



Miso soup

bring to simmer. Mix in the green onions and kale and cook for about 5 minutes. Add in the tofu and continue to simmer for 5 minutes more. Once the soup is cooking and boiling, remove from the heat. Spoon the miso into a bowl and add a ladle of the soup (about ½ cup). Whisk to mix it and dissolve in the miso. Check for the salt.

ITALIAN FRITTATA

An Italian dish prepared with leftovers makes a great breakfast item too.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups leftover spaghetti you may



Italian frittata

have prepared for a party the previous night

1 cup tomato chopped
2 tsp basil chopped
2 garlic cloves halved
1 tsp oregano or thyme
3 tbsp olive oil
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
6 large eggs, lightly beaten

METHOD

Mix all the ingredients in a mixing bowl and also the lightly beaten eggs. Transfer to a baking dish and bake in a preheated oven at 160degree C for 15-20 minutes or until the top is brown and puffed. Cut into slices and serve hot. If you want to make a non-vegetarian dish then add the bacon and add some leftover vegetables or sauté some vegetable like beans and carrots.

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THAILAND RICE MUSHROOM SOUP (Jok Het Horm)

INGREDIENTS:

soft soup prepared with rice and mushrooms

150 gm rice

4 shitake mushrooms or

200 gm button mushrooms

500 ml water

1 chicken stock cube

(or vegetable stock cube for vegetarian)

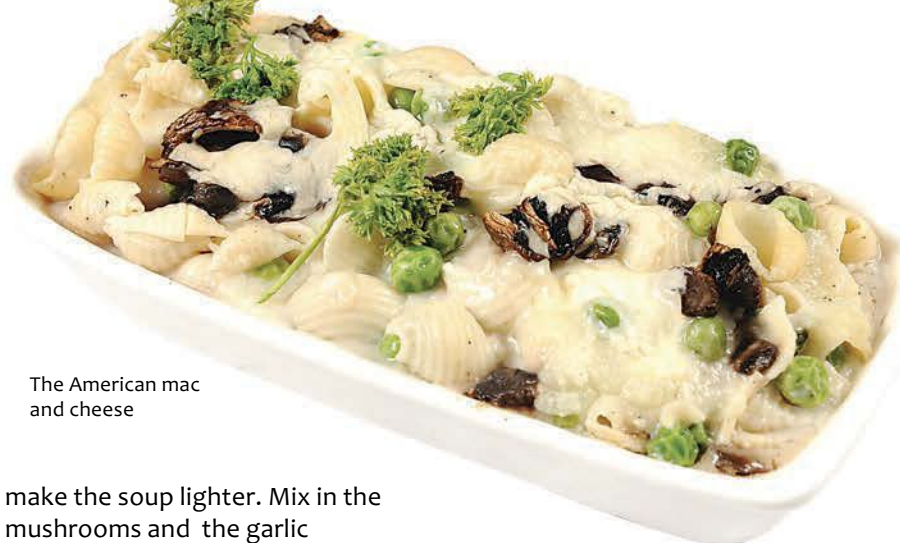
coriander leaves chopped (optional)

3 pods ginger chopped

METHOD

If you are using shitake mushrooms then soak the shitake mushrooms in water for 10 minutes. If you are using button mushrooms just cut into circles and keep aside. In the mean time, boil the rice in the water till cooked. To make smoother texture run the cooked rice through a food processor, or hand blender for a minute. To ensure that the rice is very soft and tender, you will need to cook it for a second time on a low heat. Add the chicken stock cube and stir till dissolved well. Add more water to

Thailand rice mushroom soup



The American mac and cheese

make the soup lighter. Mix in the mushrooms and the garlic continue to boil for the soup to thicken.

THE AMERICAN MAC AND CHEESE

INGREDIENTS:

400 gm macaroni

50 gm butter

2 tbsp plain flour

2 cups (500 ml) milk

2 cups (250 gm) grated cheese (gruyere, tasty, vintage)

parsley chopped to serve

1 cup peas

1 cup diced button mushrooms

salt to taste

METHOD

Cook the macaroni in salted water till tender but not overboiled. Prepare the white sauce by mixing the maida with the milk and salt to taste. Blend well so that no lumps form. Place in a thick-bottomed pan and continue to keep stirring. On very low heat mix in the veggies and

the cooked macaroni. Place in a ovenproof dish. Garnish with the cheese and top with parsley. Place in an oven and bake in a preheated oven at 160 degrees C till the cheese melts and slightly brown on top. Serve as a hot breakfast.

SPANISH TOAST

INGREDIENTS:

bread-preferably multigrain

3 large firm-ripe tomatoes

1 tbsp of extra virgin olive oil

2 tsp jalepeno chopped pieces

2 pods garlic chopped

2 eggs – scrambled

salt to taste

METHOD

Use firm tomatoes. Cut into halves, discard the seeds and grate to obtain coarse pieces. Place in a bowl and mix in the remaining ingredients including the salt, jalepeno, garlic and oil and mix well. Place on top of each bread slice and garnish with a portion of scrambled eggs.

Spanish toast





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FRENCH CROISSANT WITH HAM AND CHEESE

INGREDIENTS:

1 croissant
3 tbsp butter

For filling:

salad leaves
2 slices Parmesan cheese
2 slices ham
1 tsp mustard

METHOD

A simple breakfast but very popular all over Europe
Butter the croissant and spread the mustard. Place the ham and the cheese slices over the salad leaves and serve as a quick but favourite breakfast.

LLAPINGACHOS

A dish in the highlands of Ecuador. They are often served with fried eggs and a simple salad of lettuce, tomato and avocado.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups mashed boiled potatoes

French croissant
with ham and
cheese

1 cup cheese
3 tsp chopped onions
2 tsp paprika
salt to taste

For peanut sauce:

1½ cups milk
¼ cup onion, thinly sliced
⅓ cup natural peanut butter
salt to taste

METHOD

Mash the potatoes until smooth, mix in the onions, salt paprika and cheese and mix well. Shape into round patties and pan-fry in oil, turning once or twice till

golden brown. Serve as breakfast topped with the sauce.

To prepare the sauce: Simmer the milk and sliced onion in a small saucepan for about 10 minutes. Do not boil. Strain the onions from the milk and discard. Whisk the peanut butter into the warm milk and season to taste with salt. Bring to boil, reduce heat to low and simmer until thickened, 4 to 5 minutes.

The sauce should be the consistency of heavy cream. Add a little more milk or peanut butter as needed. Set aside.

Llapingachos



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AFRICAN TARTALE

INGREDIENTS:

A good breakfast or snack item
2 ripened bananas
1½ cups flour
3 pinches soda-bi-carb
1 tsp powdered sugar
½ tsp cinnamon powder
oil for deep frying

African tartale

METHOD

Blend together the ripened mashed bananas with the flour, sugar and cinnamon powder and the soda. Blend well. Heat oil for deep frying and drop small portions with a dessert spoon into hot oil and fry the tartales till golden brown. Turn over once or twice and cook on medium heat till crispy.

We have made a little variation to the recipe: You can make a pliable dough by kneading all the ingredients together. Divide this dough into 2 portion and roll out each portion into a thick chapatti.

Cinnamon loaf



French baguette sandwich

Use a cookie cutter to cut portions and give the tartales a round shape. Make light insertions with the tip of your knife on each of the round pieces. Fry these on medium heat a few at a time. Turn over to make sure that both sides of each tartale is crispy and golden brown. These can be stored for 2-3 days.

CINNAMON LOAF

INGREDIENTS:

2½ tsp instant yeast
1 cup unsweetened plain almond milk
½ cup butter
3 cups all-purpose flour
1½ tsp ground cinnamon
¼ cup cane sugar, divided
¼ tsp salt

METHOD

In a large sauce pan heat the almond milk and mix in the yeast and blend well so that the yeast mixes into the milk. Mix in the sugar and leave to rise.

Sift the flour and the salt and now mix in the soaked yeast into the flour and knead into a dough. Leave aside covering with a moist cloth and allow it to rise. The dough will be sticky. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough into a thin rectangle. Brush with 3 tbsp melted butter and top with ¼ cup sugar and 1/2-1 tbsp cinnamon (to taste).

Starting at one end, tightly roll up the dough and situate seam

side down. Then with a serrated knife or a string of floss, cut the dough into 1.5 - 2 inch sections and position in a well-buttered 8x8-inch square or comparably sized round pan (you should have about 10 rolls). Brush with remaining 2 tbsp (melted) butter and cover with plastic wrap. Set on top of the oven to let rise again while you preheat oven to 350 degrees F (176 C). Once the oven is hot, bake rolls for 25-30 minutes or till slightly golden brown.

FRENCH BAGUETTE SANDWICH

You can use French bread baguette or multigrain bread.

INGREDIENTS:

3 tbsp mayonnaise
2 pods garlic finely chopped
1 tbsp fresh thyme
1 cup sauted vegetables (beans, carrots or zucchini or yellow squash or mushroom)
1 tsp vinegar
3 tbsp olive

METHOD

To sauté the vegetables, heat the oil and fry the vegetables, adding vinegar and thyme and chopped garlic. Sauté and keep aside checking for the salt. Spread the mayonnaise on the bread. Place the sauted vegetables and the cheese slice and grill till the cheese begins to melt.

KOTTU FROM SRI LANKA

INGREDIENTS:

Vegetable kottu roti

4-5 leftover rotis

1/2 onion chopped

1 tsp garlic chopped

ginger chopped

1/4 cup tomato chopped

1 tsp crushed chillies

kesari or turmeric

2 tbsp carrot

2 tbsp beans

1 tbsp leeks

3 tbsp oil

METHOD

Heat the oil and fry the onions till translucent. Then add tomatoes and chillies and the vegetables and stir-fry for a few minutes. Mix in the spices and continue to fry. Add one cup of water. Add salt and bring to boil. Break the roti into pieces and mix into the boiling gravy. Stir well and then allow to cook on low fire till the gravy is absorbed into the rotis and the preparation is dry. You can add a portion of chicken or fish if you want a non-vegetarian version.

pour about 1 cup of water into a saucepan, and place the rice in a steamer insert inside the saucepan. Cover tightly and steam over low to medium heat for 20 minutes. While the rice is steaming, make the first sauce. You will make two coconut sauces to go on the rice. Thin one to mix into the rice itself, and then a thicker sauce to spoon over the top. Start by opening the can of coconut milk and spooning out the thick cream on top.

Place the thicker coconut cream in a small bowl. You should have approximately 1/2 cup, give or take a bit. Pour the thinner, lighter coconut milk left in the can into a small saucepan. (It will be a little over 1 cup.) Stir in 2 tbsp sugar and 3/4 tsp salt. Warm over medium heat, stirring frequently for 5 minutes. Do not let the sauce boil. By now the rice is probably done. The grains should be tender and shiny. Spoon the rice out into a bowl (it will be clumpy).

Slowly pour the warm coconut milk over the rice in the bowl, stirring frequently. You want the

milk to coat the rice but not leave puddles. Keep stirring, and start pouring in coconut milk when it looks like the rice is saturated. You may not use all the milk. Set the rice aside to finish absorbing the coconut milk. After 15 minutes or so it should have soaked up any milk that is still liquid. While the rice is standing, make the coconut topping sauce. Rinse out the coconut milk saucepan, and pour in the coconut cream that you took off the top of the can. Stir in 1 tablespoon sugar, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. In a separate bowl, whisk together a few teaspoons of water and the cornstarch.

Whisk this cornstarch slurry into the coconut cream and cook over low heat for about 3 minutes, or till the mixture thickens considerably. Set aside.

To serve, place about 1/3 cup cooked sticky rice on each plate, and arrange mango slices around it. Drizzle with the coconut topping sauce, and sprinkle with a few toasted sesame seeds. Garnish with a mint sprig, (if using) and eat while still warm.

THAI STICKY RICE WITH MANGO

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup Thai sweet or sticky rice

1 can coconut milk

3 tbsp raw or white sugar

1 tsp salt divided

1/2 tsp cornstarch

2 ripe mangoes

toasted sesame seeds

1/2 cup chopped fresh coconut

METHOD

Soak 1 cup of dry sticky rice in water for about 1 hour. Drain the rice and rinse it thoroughly. Then



Kottu from Sri Lanka

Thai sticky rice with mango





BALEADAS

This is a Mexican breakfast where you can create your own Baleadas by stuffing ready-made tortillas. It could be a simple filling of beans, cheese and sour cream or make it little elaborate adding to the filling anything from vegetarian to non-vegetarian items.

INGREDIENTS:

4 tortillas
3 cups beans
tsp olive oil
2 cups scrambled eggs
Jalepeno chillies
1 cup grated feta cheese or parmesan cheese
1 cup thick sour cream
salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Heat the oil and cook the beans till a little cooked but still crunchy, adding salt and pepper to taste.

To assemble the Baleadas: Place on a non stick pan and heat one side of the tortilla. Place a portion of the prepared beans, a small portion of the cheese and a small portion of the sour cream

Baleadas



Arabian swarma roll

and fold the tortilla over and serve hot. Prepare all the tortillas in this way.

ARABIAN SWARMA ROLL

INGREDIENTS:

500 gm boneless chicken

For marinade:

1 cup oil
2 tsp jeera powder – cumin
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp all spice
1 tsp turmeric powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cinnamon powder
salt and pepper to taste

For cooking and garnishing:

1 cup oil
3 tsp all spice, paprika and turmeric powder mixed together

METHOD

Tortillas or roomali rotis for serving. Mix all the ingredients for the marinade and marinate the chicken pieces with this marinade and keep aside for one hour. Place in an oven to roast the chicken pieces, sprinkling the remaining oil and spices while roasting. Once roasted well shred the chicken into very small pieces.

To assemble: Place the chicken pieces in the centre of the pita bread or tortilla and fold and serve as a roll.

Variation: You can use a maida paratha for rolling the stuffing. We have used a maida paratha.



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MACKREAL WITH MASHED POTATOES AND PEAS

INGREDIENTS:

1 mackreal fish

For marinade:

1 cup olive oil
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp pepper powder
2 tbsp lemon juice
salt to taste

For potatoes and peas:

2 cups mashed potatoes
1 cup peas
1 cup melted butter
salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Marinate the mackreal with the marinade and keep aside for 1 hour. Grill in the oven till crispy.

To prepare the mashed potatoes: Heat the butter and stir fry peas for 30 seconds. Mix in the potatoes, salt and pepper, and mix well. Serve with the mackreal for breakfast.

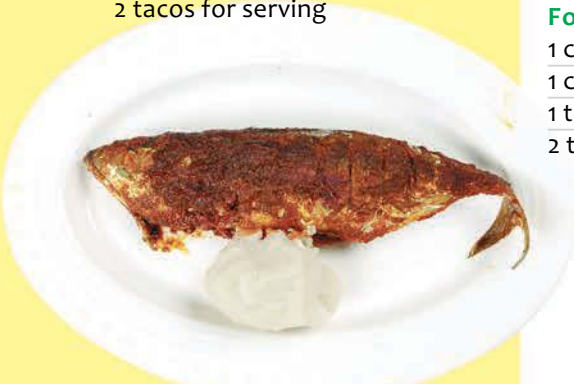
TACOS

Tacos is a very convenient item for breakfast. You can adjust the seasonings and fillings as per your own requirement.

We have prepared a vegetarian healthy option for breakfast. You can add sausages, salami or eggs to give it a non-vegetarian taste.

INGREDIENTS:

2 tacos for serving



Tacos

For filling:

salad leaves
1 cup mixed veggies
1 cup tofu or cottage cheese
2 tsp olive oil
1 tsp oregano
1 cup chopped tomatoes
1 tsp lemon juice – optional
salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Heat the oil and sauté the veggies till crunchy. Mix in the cottage cheese or tofu and add the spices and stir fry for 2 minutes. Place in tacos with salad leaves and serve at once so that the taco is not soggy.

AUSTRALIAN JAFFLE

INGREDIENTS:

2 slices bread
2 eggs beaten
1 tomato chopped
1/2 onion finely chopped
1 green chilli chopped (optional)
2 tsp grated cheese
2 tsp olive oil
salt to taste

For gravy:

1 cup browned onions
1 cup tomato puree
1 tsp curry powder
2 tbsp oil

Mackreal with mashed potatoes and peas



Australian jaffle

METHOD

To prepare the filling: Heat the oil, fry the onions till translucent. Add the tomatoes and chillies – if using and add salt to taste. Mix in the beaten eggs and prepare scrambled eggs.

Cook for a few seconds for the beaten eggs to set and scramble. Add the cheese and mix again. Keep aside.

Place the prepared filling in between the two slices and grill to obtain a grilled sandwich.

To prepare the gravy: Heat the oil and add the browned onions, tomatoes and the spices and stir gently. Mix in one cup of water and salt to taste and bring to boil. Once the gravy begins to thicken slightly put off the heat and serve with the grilled sandwich.

Variation: You can add any other vegetarian filling to the sandwich. Maybe leftover veggies from a previous meal.

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STICKY RICE WITH STIR-FRIED VEGGIES BURMA

INGREDIENTS:

For veggies:

1 cup French beans – threaded and cut into one-inch long pieces
1 carrot – scrapped lightly and cut into strips
1 small head cauliflower
1 small brinjal cut into one-inch pieces
1 zucchini cut into one-inch pieces
1 medium-sized onion - quartered
2 tsp tomato paste
1 pod garlic – finely chopped
1/2 tsp ginger finely chopped
1 tsp cornstarch to thicken the gravy
3 tbsp olive oil
salt and pepper powder to taste
salt to taste

To serve:

sticky rice

METHOD

Heat the oil and stir-fry the veggies till tender but not overcooked. Mix in the ginger, garlic and the rest of tomato paste and stir gently. Mix cornstarch with 1 cup of water and stir gently so that the cornstarch gets mixed well into the cup of water. Mix into the veggies and continue to stir and mix till the gravy thickens and the veggies are mixed well into the vegetables. Serve with sticky rice as an accompaniment to a full meal.

Sticky rice with
stir-fried veggies
Burma

THUKPA FROM THE HIMALAYAN REGION

INGREDIENTS:

Kopal masala spice blend:

1 tsp cumin
1 tsp coriander
6 cardamom pods
6 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 tsp black peppercorns
1/4 tsp freshly grated nutmeg

For plus:

1 tsp chilli powder
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp dried red chilli flakes (optional)

For Broth:

3 tbsp butter
3 cloves garlic, peeled and finely minced
1 inch-piece ginger, peeled and finely shredded
1 small onion, peeled and finely chopped
8 cups vegetable stock
1 cup coconut milk
salt and pepper to taste

Vegetables:

2 potatoes peeled and diced
2 tomatoes coarsely chopped
1 medium-sized carrot cut into strips

1 cup beans cut into one inch pieces

2 cups egg noodles – fresh or dried

METHOD

Combine all spice ingredients in a small bowl and set aside. Melt butter in a pan over medium heat. Add garlic, ginger, and onion and sauté until tender and fragrant. Add vegetable stock and bring to boil. Reduce heat and allow stock and spices to simmer uncovered on very low heat for 1 hour. Remove from the heat, strain stock through a sieve to remove the whole spices and return the soup broth to the pan. Add vegetables and simmer for 20 minutes.

Add noodles and continue simmering for 10 minutes till noodles and potatoes are tender. Mix in the coconut milk and serve immediately.

Thukpa from the Himalayan region



NAAN NEBYEOH

(This dish is popular Burmese dish)

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups white mator soaked in water overnight
1 onion chopped
2 pods garlic – minced
2 cups coconut milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp turmeric powder
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp paprika
3 tsp oil
bread or naan to serve
salt to taste

METHOD

Soak the white peas overnight and then boil in a pressure cooker till tender but still firm and not overcooked.

Heat the oil and fry the onions till translucent. Mix in the garlic pods and the boiled peas without the water. Mix in the spices and stir gently.

Add the coconut milk and bring to boil. Lower the heat and continue to cook till all the coconut milk is absorbed and the preparation is almost dry. Serve with bread for breakfast.

Naan nebyeoh

SCOTT EGGS

INGREDIENTS:

250 gm sausages
200 gm boiled mashed potatoes
1 tbsp grated onion
 $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp cinnamon powder
3 pinches nutmeg powder
4 hard boiled eggs
2 cups of bread crumbs
oil for deep frying
salt to taste

METHOD

Cook the sausages and blend together with the potatoes and mash well and place in a mixing bowl. Mix in the remaining ingredients and blend well. Divide this mixture into 4 portions. Work with each portion at one time. Place the mixture in your palm and place a boiled egg in the centre and then fold the mixture around the egg to form a round ball with the egg in the centre covered with the mashed potatoes and sausage mixture. Roll in bread crumbs and fry in oil two at a time. Work with all the eggs in the same way.

Variation: You can also bake these in a preheated oven at 160 degree C for 15-20 minutes or golden brown and crispy.



Scott eggs

Another variation is if you want to avoid the sausages then use only mashed potatoes for the coating of the egg.

JAPANESE OMELETTE

INGREDIENTS:

6 eggs
3 tsp oil for frying
salt to taste

METHOD

Beat the eggs well mixing salt to taste. Divide this egg batter into 3 portions. Spread each portion on an oiled frying pan and spread evenly. Cook one side and remove carefully onto a sushi mat. Prepare the other two omelettes in this way and put on top of the first prepared omelette and gently roll over with the help of the mat. Roll up tightly and cut into circles and serve with soya sauce for breakfast.

Japanese omelette





SINGAPORE RICE CAKE WITH RADISH

INGREDIENTS:

For rice cakes:

150 gm rice flour
4 tbsp tapioca flour
1 tbsp wheat starch
1 tbsp vegetable oil
salt to taste

For topping:

300 gm preserved radish (chye poh) – soak in water for a few hours

1/4 cup dried shrimps soaked in water till soft
3 onions finely chopped
3 cloves garlic
2 red chillies
2 tbsp soya sauce
3 tsp sugar

METHOD

Sift together the flours together. Now, mix the soya sauce, sugar in 300 ml of water and bring to a boil. Slowly mix in the sifted flours into the boiling liquid syrup and on low fire keep stirring till no lumps forms and the consistency is thick but not lumpy. Pour this mixture into moulds and steam the moulds in a steamer for it to set.

For the topping: If you can find preserved radish you can use this and add the shrimps to it with the remaining ingredients.

We have used freshly grated

Singapore
rice cake with
radish



Nasi lemak
from Malaysia

radish and mixed the other ingredients together. You can avoid the shrimps if you want it a vegetarian version.

NASI LEMAK FROM MALAYSIA

A Malaysian/Indonesian breakfast staple, nasi lemak is basically a big pile of rice with assorted relishes and condiments. This could include spicy, fishy sambal, dried anchovies, peanuts, cucumbers, hard-cooked eggs, and peanuts to accompany the rice which is often flavoured with coconut and/or pandan.

INGREDIENTS:

For rice:

1 cup Jasmine fragrant rice (washed and drained)
1 cup undiluted coconut milk
1 1/2 cup water
3 to 4 pandan (screw-pine) leaves slightly shredded and tied into a knot
1/2 inch-piece ginger chopped lengthwise
Few strands of lemongrass
salt to taste

For Sambal:

8-10 dried red chillies (cut each chilli into 2-3 pieces and soak in warm water)
3-4 cloves garlic

5-6 shallots
few strands of lemongrass
1 onion, cut into slices or rings
2 tbsp oil
1 tsp sugar
2 tsp tamarind juice
salt to taste

For condiments:

1 cucumber, cut into thin slices
3-4 tbsp peanuts (pan-fried with 1/2 tbsp of oil until crisp and fragrant)
spiced veggies (ossed french beans, carrots sticks with some chilli paste and salt

METHOD

To prepare the rice: Place the rice in the rice cooker pot along with water, coconut milk, ginger, lemongrass and tied Pandan leaves. Sprinkle salt and stir well. Cook the rice, fluff with a fork and keep warm until ready to serve.

Drain the soaked chillies and grind it with shallots, garlic and chopped lemongrass strands to a paste. Use little water while grinding.

Heat up cooking oil in a frying pan or a wok on medium heat and fry this blended paste for about 7-10 minutes. Add onion rings and fry for 2-3 minutes more. Add water to attain the desired consistency. Add the tamarind juice and season with salt and sugar. Stir well and turn off the flame. Serve the rice with a portion of the sambal, place a few slices of cucumber, some pan-fried peanuts and spiced veggies.

Serve hot.

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MUTTON NIHARI

INGREDIENTS:

1 kg meat
2 tbsp refined oil
3-4 green cardamom
1 tsp whole cinnamon
2 black cardamoms
2-3 bay leaves
1 tsp turmeric powder
1/4 cup water
1 tsp ginger-garlic paste
1 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp red chilli powder
1 tsp garlic – fried and ground
1 tsp onions – fried and ground
3 tbsp yoghurt – beaten
2 tsp gulab jal
2 tsp garam masala
1/2 tsp nutmeg-cardamom powder
1/2 tsp saffron – soaked in water
few drops of itar
wheat dough for dum
fresh coriander and ginger
salt to taste

For garnishing:

juliennes

METHOD

Heat oil in a pan and add green cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, black cardamom and bay leaves.

Add the meat and sauté till lightly fried. Now, add salt and turmeric and mix well. Pour in the water, cover the pan and cook.

When it starts boiling, add ginger- garlic paste, coriander powder, red chilli, garlic paste and onion paste. Mix well and add yoghurt, gulab jal, garam masala, nutmeg and cinnamon powder and saffron. Again, cover and cook for 2-3 minutes.

Transfer the meat in a heavy bottomed pan and strain the gravy. Add few drops of itar and cover the pan.

Seal it with the wheat dough and cook on low fire. Once done, garnish with fresh coriander and ginger juliennes and serve.

BUBBLE AND SQUEAK

Bubble and squeak gets its name from the sound it makes as it is cooking. It is a popular breakfast or supper dish in England, made from the leftovers of a roast beef dinner and often served with bacon and eggs. Also known as "bubble and scrape" or "fry up."

INGREDIENTS:

3 to 4 potatoes peeled, cooked and mashed roughly
1 small head cabbage, cooked and chopped
3 to 4 tbsp butter oil
1 onion chopped finely
salt and pepper to taste

METHOD

Mix the potatoes and cabbage together in a bowl and season with salt and pepper.

Heat the butter or oil in a heavy

skillet over medium-high flame. Saute the onion till translucent.

Stir in the potato-cabbage mixture and press down into the skillet. Reduce heat to medium and cook undisturbed till the bottom is browned, for 10 minutes. Then turn potatoes to brown on the other side. Do this carefully.

Variation: Add diced ham or chopped sausages to the potato-cabbage mixture.

Often Brussels sprouts are used instead of cabbage.

Bubble and squeak can be baked in the oven. Just saute the onions in 2 tablespoons of butter, oil or bacon fat. Mix with the potato-cabbage mixture and press into a baking dish. Bake in a 350°F till browned on top, 20 to 25 minutes.

Bubble and squeak

Mutton nihari





French baked cauliflower

FRENCH BAKED CAULIFLOWER

INGREDIENTS:

1 small head cauliflower
3 tbsp oil or butter
2 cups mozzarella cheese
salt to taste

For sauce:

2 cups milk
1 bay leaf
3 tbsp milk
1 tsp sugar
pepper to taste
a pinch of salt

METHOD

Warm the milk and add the bay leaf. Slowly mix in the maida and whisk all the time so that no lumps form. Mix in the salt, pepper and sugar and let the sauce thicken.

To prepare the cauliflower head: Discard the lower portion and use only the head. Place in a non-stick pan and fry the

cauliflower head for a few minutes, turning once so that the head is slightly brown. Place in a oven tray or bowl, pour the sauce over and sprinkle with the cheese and cook in a preheated oven at 180 degree c for 10-15 minutes or till the cheese is melted.

HOME-MADE PIZZA ROLLS

INGREDIENTS:

2 cans refrigerated pizza crust
Italian seasoning
1 cup sliced and chopped pepperoni
1 cup shredded cheese
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
sweet tomato basil pasta sauce for dipping
garlic salt

METHOD

Preheat oven to 425.
Dust a large cutting board or piece of wax paper with flour and roll out each pizza crust.
Season each crust with garlic salt and Italian seasoning.

Home-made pizza rolls



Breakfast calzones

Top with cheese and meat.
Starting with a short end, roll crust into a tight log.
Place on lightly greased pan and bake for 10-12 minutes.
Serve topped with basil.

BREAKFAST CALZONES

INGREDIENTS:

1 can refrigerated pizza dough
4 eggs
1 cup cooked keema
1/2 c. shredded cheese
salt and pepper

METHOD

Preheat oven according to pizza dough instructions. Scramble the eggs. Be sure to sprinkle the eggs generously with salt and pepper.

Unroll the pizza dough and use a rolling pin to roll it into a 12 inch by 10 inch rectangle. Cut the dough in half vertically and then in half horizontally to form four rectangles. The rectangles should be about five by six inches.

Place one quarter of the scrambled eggs on top of the pizza dough and top with two tablespoons of cheese and cooked keema. Fold half of the dough over the cheese and use a fork to seal the calzone.

Bake till calzones are golden.





KIRI ROTI

A Sri Lankan dish prepared with flour and coconut milk which forms a popular breakfast item.

INGREDIENTS:

100 gm flour
1 egg
50 ml coconut milk
2 tsp sugar
2 tsp sesame oil
a pinch of salt

METHOD

Sift together the flour salt and sugar. Add the coconut milk and the egg and blend well to obtain a smooth mixture. Spread oil on a non-stick tava and prepare a pancake. Cook on one side over low heat to ensure it is well cooked. Remove and serve.

Variation: You could place some jam in the centre and roll to form a roll or you could even add some grated coconut or coconut cut into very small pieces and add it to the pancake batter

QUICHE

INGREDIENTS:

1 9-inch refrigerated piecrust
2 tbsp olive oil
2 medium onions, chopped
1 cup fresh parsley, chopped
4 large eggs
1/8 tsp ground nutmeg
8 ounces gruyere grated
4 cups mixed greens
salt and black pepper

Kiri roti



Quiche

METHOD

Heat oven to 375°F. Fit the crust into a 9-inch pie plate. Place on a baking sheet.

Heat 1 tbsp of the oil in a large skillet over medium-low flame. Add the onions and 1/2 tsp each of salt and pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, till soft, 5 to 7 minutes. Stir in the parsley.

In a large bowl, whisk together the eggs, half-and-half, nutmeg, and 1/4 teaspoon salt. Stir in the onion mixture and the Gruyère.

Pour the egg mixture into the crust. Bake till a knife inserted in the centre comes out clean after 35 to 40 minutes. Let sit for 5 minutes.

Variation: You can add shredded cooked chicken, boneless fish or an assortment of mixed veggies if you want the quiche to taste and look different. Just use your imagination for a combination of different items.



French breakfast crepes

2 cups milk
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking soda
3 tbsp butter or oil for frying the pancake
1/2 tsp salt

METHOD

Combine flour, baking soda, and salt. In a separate bowl, beat eggs and milk with a wire whisk and add to flour mixture. Whisk until lumps are smooth.

Melt 1 tbsp of butter in a pan over moderately high heat. Place 2 serving spoons of batter in a circular direction. Using the back of the spoon, quickly spread the batter to cover the bottom of your pan as you make dosas

Flip when underside browns and sides begin to curl. Brown this side and serve immediately. Repeat with rest of batter. Garnish with fresh fruit and serve with warm maple syrup.

FRENCH BREAKFAST CREPES

INGREDIENTS:

3 large eggs

New Soul is Breathing in Me!

Daljeet Kaur

Daljeet Kaur is currently one of the most talked about actresses of small screen. The reason is her glamorous and enchanting new avatar post her drastic weight loss. She recently opened up about the abusive marriage with actor Shaleen Bhanot and her marital life. She is independent, strong, glamorous and all set to begin her new journey with the astonishing avatar.

In an interview with Woman's Era, Daljeet Kaur speaks about her professional journey, her weight loss, her upcoming shows and many more.

Tell us something about your professional journey so far?

My journey has been like a film, with fluke entry in the industry to making my way to the most applauded shows.

Let's talk about the fabulous transformation of post marriage weight loss. What spurred you to do it? When did you decide and how many months it took you?

First 18 kgs I lost in the first five months itself. I used to do 4000 skips and started dieting and then it was slower because of the stubborn fat that had come due to post delivery. But I was determined to achieve a perfect body and toned than what I had before I even got married.

Do you feel like a different person now? What's your key to staying focused on the fitness goal? Please share your favourite workout?

Yes, I am a completely new person now. I feel like a new soul is breathing

The actress is back on small screen with her fiery and enthusiastic vibes.

By Aditi Rastogi

in me now. The only way to keep motivating myself was to keep looking at my newborn baby. I just knew I couldn't afford to go wrong anywhere, be it my physical self or in my confidence level. I personally love doing cardio and muscle training every alternate day and Sunday is my off day.

How did you take care of your son Jaydon? Do you get support from your parents/relatives as your working schedule is so hectic?

My parents and my sisters are my strength. They take care of him just the way I would. Now, I shoot without worrying for him and when I come back home, his smile makes everything worth it.

What kind of show will you take up? Would you prefer Reality Shows, Romantic Serials, a Rom Com or Thriller-based serial?

I would love to do anything that I haven't done before. I feel as an actor I am appreciated and now I feel the producers might come up with scripts that might inspire me.

Would you like to work in reality show like Big Boss or Jhalak Dikhalaa Jaa?

Yes, why not. I watch both the

shows and it's entertaining. Bigg Boss I can't do now as I have a small baby at home and I can't live without him any moment after I finish work. So I don't want to be annoying with crying baby on the show, hahah.

What kind of problem did you face in your martial life and how did you cope?

It's all now, in the past so no comments. I believe when you are determined to make your life better, you do.

You have suffered with Domestic Violence in your married life? What is your advice to deal with this trauma?

It's important to speak at the right time.

Tell us something about your upcoming shows, any movie offer?

I'm now physically and mentally prepared to look for a new show. So, I am hoping I will sign something good soon.

What is your good message for the readers of Woman's Era?

Life is an opportunity to make a difference. Be true to your soul. You will be surprised that you made a difference for better world.



ADAPT, SURVIVE AND STAY HAPPY

Keep calm during trouble times.

By Arjun Kamal

Faced with difficult times, we get upset and feel why did it happen to us. We wonder why life gets so rough and dark all of a sudden. But one should accept whatever is happening with courage and deal with it.

The systems are never meant to be completely perfect. Be it your health, economy of your country, the money in your pocket, the cities in which you live, your job, your relationship or your life. Don't worry, things are going to be bad sometimes. Crashes and burns will happen and you will get hurt. You will encounter really wicked and evil people. There will be betrayals, unfair situations, break-ups, fights, frustration and even death.

What's most important in an event of crisis is staying calm, adapting to the situation and making a plan quickly when everything you planned fails.

We can look at this from a scientific point of view. According to the second law of thermodynamics, whatever amount of disorder there is in the universe, it is steadily growing. All the systems tend to get into a random or disordered state. And, I believe, so do our lives.

In the diagram given above, if you consider yourself a dot, think of all the lines as the events that occur during your lifetime. Think of red lines as bad events and blue lines as good ones. You, as a dot can meet these lines or stay away from them. You can also break, push or pull the lines closer to you.



"... ..I say never be complete, I say stop being perfect, I say let... let's evolve, let the chips fall where they may.

"Brad Pitt in the movie Fight Club (1999)

Sometimes it's in our hands whether as a dot we want to meet these lines or not. Often due to misfortune, we end up meeting a red line. Like it or not, the events will happen. For example, a car accident is waiting to happen on a Monday morning on a particular road. It's a matter of chance whether we are in it, or we are just seeing it or completely oblivious to it.

Similarly whenever you face a problem, learn that it was going to happen anyhow. The universe does not like orderliness. Hence, we keep on facing messy situations. The way you look at the problem changes the whole situation, depending on how positive is your viewpoint. Once you realise this fact, you will become a calmer person. I would quote Nobel-winning physicist Richard Feynman: "The first principle is that you must not fool yourself, and you are the easiest person to fool."

We

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

I am only 25 years old and my hair is already thinning rapidly. Do women go bald? I am really scared. Please advise me how I can solve this problem.

Thin scalp hair can be a genetic problem in most cases. Do the other female members of your family also have wispy hair? Hormones could be a likely cause too. An endocrinologist can evaluate your status.

Keep your hair clean by regular washing. If you have dandruff (which could account for the hair fall) treat it with appropriate shampoos.

Eat a diet rich in iron and zinc. Your doctor can prescribe tablets too.

You can consult a hair specialist who can rule out alopecia and other hair conditions.

Women rarely go totally bald thanks to the female hormones, but patchy baldness in extreme hair loss can take place.

Please advise me whether waxing my legs is better than shaving (which I now do)? My friend says, shaving makes hair grow back thicker and quicker. Is this true?

This is not correct although it does seem that shaving has this effect. Waxing removes hair from the root, while shaving clips hair at skin level. Naturally, shaved hair grows out more visibly and with its blunt, cut ends will appear to be thick. Waxed hair takes longer to make its appearance as it has to grow from the root and its ends are also finer.

For delaying regrowth, you should use wax for hair removal. For a quicker way of removing hair, opt for shaving. In both cases, hair grows back in the same way.

I hear a lot about Kojic acid nowadays. What is it?

Yes, this product is much in the beauty world news as it is very effective in making skin smoother and blemish-free. It was discovered in Japan in 1989, and is a natural product derived from a mushroom.

Its special property is its ability to penetrate the upper skin levels and prevent the formation of skin pigmentation. Use creams and lotions containing Kojic acid when you want to remove blemishes and dark spots.

I love make-up and my dressing table is full of beauty products. My problem is that I do not know for how long I can use these items. Being expensive, I loathe to discard these until fully used.

Yes, it is a shame when you throw beauty products in the bin. But this is necessary, lest they cause adverse effects.

A simple rule is: check the expiry date which some products carry. If old, discard these. As a general rule, do not keep products for the eyes like mascara, eyeliner, concealer, etc, for more than 3 months.

If liquid make-up separates or exudes a smell, throw it away, but powders and dry shadows usually remain fresh for about 2 years.

Lipsticks are best thrown away after a year. Lotions and creams should not be normally be used after 6 months. If they smell funny, throw these away earlier.

Make-up and foundation can harm the skin if old; buy in small packs and discard every 3 months.

Do take care to keep your brushes, combs, etc, scrupulously clean with regular washing and drying. Also, do not put your fingers in the make-up jars for applying. You could contaminate the contents.

Is there some natural method of helping sagging facial skin. I am 45 years old and would love to regain the tight supple complexion I had when I was younger. Please do not suggest cosmetic surgery as I am strictly against cuts, nips and tucks done with the knife.

Here is a very effective skin tightener which you can find right in your refrigerator. Break an egg, separate the white and beat it (white) into light peaks. With a brush, apply this on your face and keep on for at least 20 minutes or till it dries.

Spray water on your face to soften the egg white and wash it off.

Rub your face all over with an ice cube, using circular movements. Wipe lightly and apply a moisturiser.



Q & A

Your skin will become tighter and firmer, making you look younger. Do this as often as you wish. Egg white is a good nourisher too.

I had very thick eyebrows some years back which I tweezed and threaded for the trendy slim brows look. Now, when luxuriously heavy eyebrows are back in fashion, I find the hairs are not growing back. Could my over-tweezing have caused this? What can I do to remedy the situation?

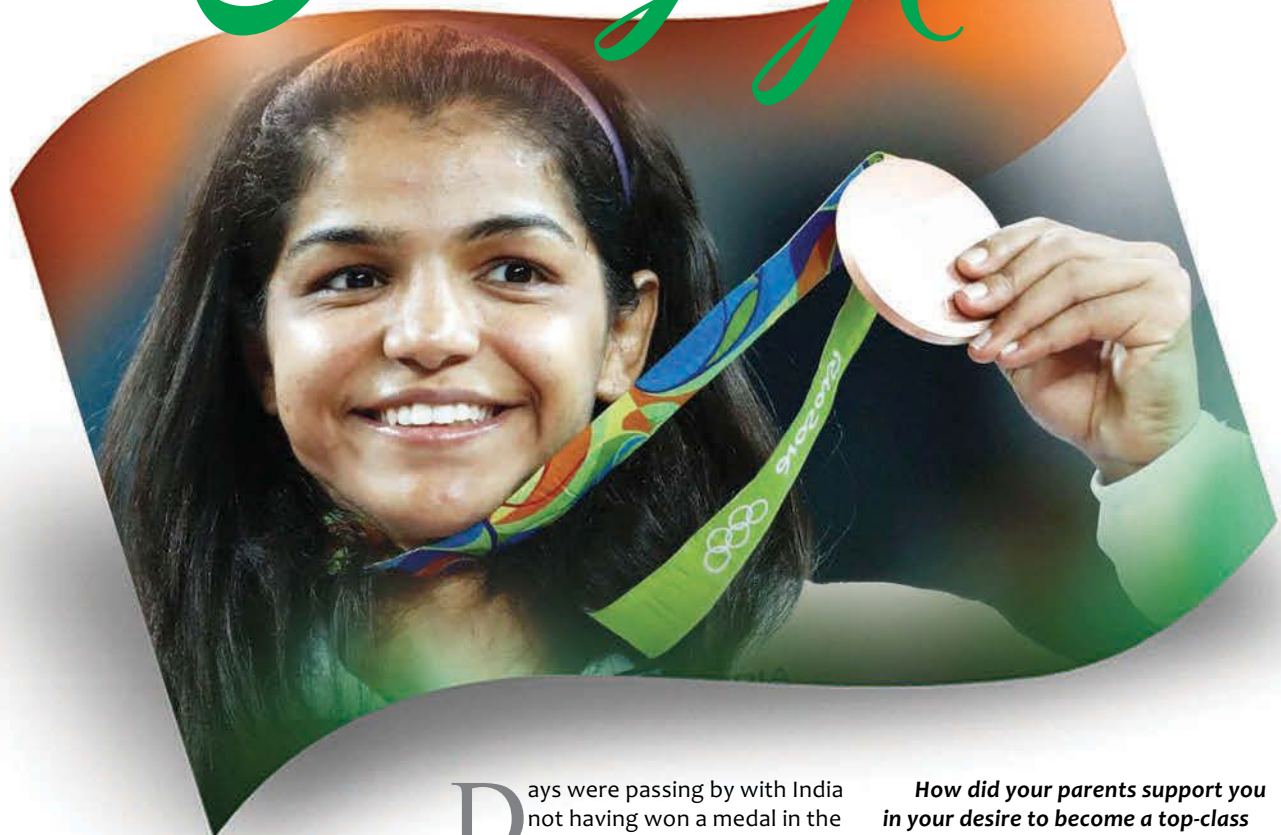
Usually, when you stop tweezing, the hairs do grow back but in a scanty and unruly way. In your case, perhaps the repeated trauma of tweezing which involves pulling out the hairs by their roots could have scarred the hair follicles.

There are special gels which promise to stimulate hair growth. Get this from a beauty product store or ask your beautician about it.

Apply this regularly, (taking care not to get it into the eyes), and you will see hairs sprouting back again. Starting with immediate effect, do not pluck, wax or thread eyebrows for some time.

For the time being, you can pencil in extra brow to simulate thickness, or even tattoo in the hairs for a more permanent effect.

The Saving Grace



India's first
medal winner in
Rio olympics.

By Vijayan Bala



Days were passing by with India not having won a medal in the Rio Olympics. It was then that the 23-year-old Sakshi Malik who was representing India in the 58 kg. category women's freestyle wrestling event picked up a bronze medal – India's first at Rio - by her sheer courage, determination and fighting spirit. Sakshi also became the first Indian woman wrestler to win a medal in the Olympics. She is the fourth Indian woman to win a medal in the Olympics with badminton star P.V. Sindhu winning a silver soon after Sakshi's bronze. WOMAN'S ERA met Sakshi, also a holder of a Master's Degree in Physical Education, at her residence at Rohtak soon after her return from Rio.

Who inspired you to take to wrestling?

I was inspired by my grandfather Chaudhary Badlu Ram who was a wrestler himself.

How did your parents support you in your desire to become a top-class wrestler?

Girls were not thought well of if they took to wrestling as it was generally regarded a male sport. In fact, only in 2002, we girls were allowed into the sport in Haryana. Society objected to my participating in the sport but not only was I determined, my parents too, totally backed me. I never gave up sport despite my mother fearing that my face would spoil and some of my relatives taunting me.

When did you take to wrestling in a proper manner?

When I was 12 years old. I joined the akhara in Chotu Ram Stadium, Rohtak, where Ishwar Singh Dahiya – a 12 time Bharat Kesari used to coach aspiring wrestlers. After a few months of training my coach made me practise and fight with the boys

because I seemed too strong for the other girls. Fortunately, I was able to make the boys struggle too. Ishwar sir, taught me a lot and was my coach till 2009 i.e. for 5 to 6 years. Mandeep then became my coach and he still helps me.

What is your normal training schedule like?

We train for about six hours in a day– both morning and evening. The training includes both physical training and practice bouts. We have to do about 500 sit-ups every day. Since our schedule is so rigorous, it has to be backed by a diet that will keep us physically strong, energetic and mentally alert.

What was your training like before the Olympics started?

For instance, about one and a half years before the Rio Olympics, our training and practice schedules became very rigorous. Apart from training and practising in India, we were given international exposure too. We had roughly two months training and bouts in Madrid (Spain) and Sophia (Bulgaria). We were also made to understand the tactical aspects of the game, especially what should be done against which opponent.

Please tell our readers about how you qualified for the Rio Olympics.

You will be surprised to know that I was not even the original choice to represent India in the Rio Olympics in the newly introduced 58 kg. freestyle wrestling category. Geeta Phogat was the first choice. However, during the first Olympic qualification tournament in Ulan Bator (Mongolia) in April 2016. Geeta, slated to fight in the repechage event pulled out at the last minute citing injury. The Wrestling Federation of India was not pleased. In December 2015, I had upset Geeta in a Pro-Wrestling bout. So for the second and final Olympic Games qualification at Istanbul, Turkey in May 2016, I participated. Luckily, I secured the quota for the Rio Olympics winning the silver medal. In the semi-final I defeated China's Lan Zhang.

What have been your major achievements at the international level before the Rio Olympics?

In 2010, I won a bronze medal in the Junior World Championships. In 2013 I won a bronze medal in the 63kg. category in the Commonwealth Championships in Johannesburg. 2014 saw me win a silver medal in the Commonwealth Games at Glasgow in the 58kg. category. I also won a bronze medal in the 60kg. category in the 2015 Asian Championships in Doha. Finally, I qualified for the Rio Olympics by winning a silver medal in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2016.

You won India's first medal in the Rio Olympics. Describe for the benefit of readers how you won the medal.

I was defeated by Russian Valeria Koblova who made it to the final. This meant that everyone whom the Russian had beaten along the way made it to the repechage. I was determined not to let this chance of winning a medal go. I outclassed my first opponent Orkhon Purevdorj of Mongolia 12-3. An hour later I faced my next opponent Aisuluu Tynybekova of Kyrgyzstan. Initially I was a little tense and nervous and with barely a minute and a half to go, I was trailing 0-5. My coach Kuldeep Malik sir, then yelled out to me to get

free from my opponent's grip and topple her. Following my coach's advice I broke free and forced my rival on the mat (2-5), then once again (4-5) and again to take a 7-5 lead. The opponent's protest at that stage was overruled and I was declared winner 8-5. I had earned India a bronze – my country's first medal at the Rio Olympics after a 12 day wait.

What was your immediate reaction after winning the medal?

I was so thrilled and excited that I leapt into the arms of my coach. He lifted me on his shoulders and did a victory lap with myself draped in the Indian tricolour.

What do you feel you need to do to win a better medal in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics?

I am more experienced and confident now having participated and done reasonably well in the Rio Olympics. I will be rectifying the errors I made at Rio and will be definitely more aggressive in future.

What qualities should one possess to become a top-level wrestler?

Apart from strength which has to combine with tactical intelligence, a wrestler in order to become top class needs to be dedicated and have a proper diet and take sufficient rest.

What must India do to produce a lot of top-class wrestlers?

Wrestling must be encouraged at the grass-root level. There must be residential academies where the trainees are carefully selected and looked after properly. Dedicated coaches are a must so that proper care is taken regarding the stay, training, diet and mental health of the trainees.

Finally, what is your message for the girls of our country?

The country must realise that we girls are no less than the boys in any field. We girls can achieve anything if we get the opportunities and encouragement. I hope the girls get inspired and reach greater heights in the future.



MORE MEDICAL MYTHS

A simple look behind your medication.

By Dr Kalpana Sarkar

Here are some more medical myths and the truth behind them.

Myth No. 1: Once a Caesarian section, always a Caesarian section.

Explanation: Usually the baby is delivered by the vaginal route but sometimes it has to be removed from the uterus by making an incision in the abdomen. This is called a Caesarian section.

Women who have delivered their first baby by a Caesarian section can sometimes deliver their next baby vaginally. Your obstetrician is the best person to guide you in this matter.

Myth No. 2: Bran should be thrown away.

Explanation: After sieving flour, what remains in the sieve is called bran. It is usually thrown away as it is thought to be useless. Bran contains zero cholesterol and is a rich source of fibre and vitamins. It should be kneaded along with the flour.

Myth No. 3: Too much coffee leads to a darker complexion.

Explanation: Hereditary factors play an important role in the colour of our complexion. Other factors include

race, cold climate and prolonged sun exposure. Drinking coffee or tea will not darken our skin.

Myth No. 4: Raw papaya is not safe during pregnancy.

Explanation: Raw papaya contains certain substances which cause contraction of the uterus and can lead to abortion of the baby. Hence it should not be eaten during pregnancy.

Myth No. 5: Epileptics can't lead a normal life.

Explanation: Epileptics can lead a normal life but they should keep away from activities such as driving, swimming and handling heavy machinery which can pose a threat to their own lives and that of others.

Myth No. 6: Diabetes is caused by eating sugar.

Explanation: Insulin is a chemical produced by our body which helps to keep our blood sugar levels within a normal range. Total or relative lack of insulin is the cause for diabetes leading to an abnormally high blood sugar level. Diabetics should not eat sugar and should follow their doctor's advice carefully.

Myth No. 7: Cow dung should be applied on the freshly cut umbilical cord of the baby.

Explanation: This custom is prevalent even today in the villages of India and can result in the development of tetanus, also known as lockjaw. The umbilical stump should be covered with a sterile dressing.

Myth No. 8: Colds should be treated with antibiotics.

Explanation: Antibiotics are effective only against bacteria and hence will not be effective against a cold which is caused by a virus. A cold is treated symptomatically and antibiotics are given only if there is secondary infection.

Myth No. 9: I can take the same medicines as that of my friend because my symptoms are the same.

Explanation: Your symptoms may be the same as your friend but you may be having an entirely different illness – in which case your friend's, medicines will not be effective at all. Let a doctor give you the correct treatment.

Myth No. 10: Fruit juices are better than eating the whole fruit.

Explanation: Eating the whole fruit is better as you are also getting fibre, which is missing from the fruit juice. Fibre forms an integral part of our food. It helps in cleaning the gut, is a boon for weight watchers and also prevents certain gut cancers.

Myth No. 11: Lemon juice causes osteoporosis.

Explanation: Osteoporosis, also known as brittle bone disease, is a condition in which the bones become so fragile that they break easily.

Calcium and vitamin D deficiency, hormonal imbalance and hormonal deficiencies, smoking, drinking and a sedentary lifestyle, certain medications, soft drinks and certain illnesses are some of the causes of osteoporosis.

Lemon juice is good for the body, but too much is not good for the teeth as the acid destroys the tooth enamel leading to cavities and sensitive teeth.

Myth No. 12: Mushrooms are formed by the monkeys' urine.

Explanation: Mushrooms belong neither to the plant kingdom nor the animal kingdom. They come under the category of fungi and are propagated by spores.

They are low in calories (38 calories/100gms) and rich in fibre, iron, potassium, and vitamin D. They are incorporated into many dishes and are good for weight management, for the heart and for increasing the body immunity.

The creamy white mushrooms which we get during winters are known as button mushrooms. However, all mushrooms are not edible and eating the wrong kind may lead to poisoning.

Myth No. 13: Non-stick pans are safe.

Explanation: Foods cooked in non-stick pans use less oil. Teflon is the chemical which is used to coat the pan, and this increases the risk of heart and thyroid disease. Overheating to more than 260°C

causes the formation of cancer causing agents. If you are using a non-stick pan, use it for low-temperature cooking.

Myth No. 14: Squeezing is the best way to remove pimples.

Explanation: Squeezing a pimple can cause scarring and darkening of the skin. If there is an infection present, it can spread to the surrounding tissues. Wash your face frequently and apply anti-pimple cream.

THE CREAMY WHITE MUSHROOMS WHICH WE GET DURING WINTERS ARE KNOWN AS BUTTON MUSHROOMS.

HOWEVER, ALL MUSHROOMS ARE NOT EDIBLE AND EATING THE WRONG KIND MAY LEAD TO POISONING.

Myth No. 15: I can down my medicines with alcohol.

Explanation: Alcohol reacts with certain medicines and can make you sicker. Swallow your medicines with water.

Myth No. 16: Herbal medicines can safely be given with allopathic medicines.

Explanation: Different parts of the plant – roots, stems, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds – are used for treating many illnesses. They are usually safe, but there are always exceptions. For example, ginseng - which vitalises the body - should not be given to people who are on blood-thinning medication. Always inform your doctor about all the medicines you are taking.

Myth No. 17: I can adjust my medication dose according to the severity of my illness.



Explanation: If you want your treatment to be really effective you should follow the advice of your doctor and not tamper with the dosage of your medicine. For each sickness a specific dosage and duration schedule has been worked out, and adjusting the dose yourself can result in prolonging the illness.

Myth No. 18: Margarine is better than butter.

Explanation: Butter is made from the cream of cow or buffalo milk. It contains cholesterol. Margarine is made from vegetable oils, but contains transfat, and zero cholesterol. Use both sparingly.

Myth No. 19: Negative calorie foods are good for weight-loss.

Explanation: There are certain foods like cabbage, etc, which use up more calories during digestion than what they actually contain. These are termed 'negative calorie foods'. Theory-wise they seem to be good for weight-reduction, but they are not so practically, as they can lead to nutritional deficiencies. For losing weight follow a low calorie-balanced diet.

We

Men are not prisoners of fate, but only prisoners of their own minds.

I am a 15-year-old school girl suffering from insomnia. I cannot fall asleep till 1 o'clock in the morning and then I have to get up at 4.30 to get ready for school. My friends say I am an owl, my sleep routine will never change. I have even started getting dark circles and bags under my eyes. Please help or I will go crazy.

There must be something you do which is firing your brain at night and keeping away sleep. Stop watching TV at night, especially violent, mentally stimulating telecasts which leave you excited, scared or even thoughtful.

In the evening do some strenuous workout or go for long walks which will physically tire you out and make you want to hit the sack. Calm your mind with meditation and yoga, have a warm bedtime drink or read literature which will give you a sense of peace. If all this fails, consult a doctor to check you out. Some deficiencies do cause low sleep levels.

I am a 15-year-old girl blessed with musical talent. In fact, I have a cupboard with the awards and certificates I have won in several competitions. Music is my life.

My problem is that since I have to do the mandatory 3-hour riyaz my guruji asks for, I am unable to devote time to my school work. My parents want me to concentrate on studies now and resume my music after a few years. But this will be disastrous. I will lose touch and will be unable to regain the lost time. Can't I concentrate on music, make it my profession and stop studying? My parents are dead against this.

A stark reality of life is that we have to earn a living to lead a good life. For this, educational qualifications are absolutely vital. Music can feed the soul but not the body. To make music a profession is possible but very difficult. So many aspirants fall by the wayside and starve. This does not mean you have to forsake your passion. Just give it a little less time and seriously study for the time being. In fact, with careful planning, some sacrifices and compromises you can have both music and studies. It needs hard work and complete discipline. Ask your parents and guruji to work out schedules for you. You should know that most successful artistes also have a profession to fall back on even when they are indulging in their love for the arts. You too should do this.

I am a 15-year-old school girl who is desperate to do an undergraduate course in the UK. Two of my cousins are already studying there and I want to join them after my plus 2 exams. My parents are strongly against this idea, saying I will be too young to stay in a foreign land, but I know it is because I am their single child and they are very possessive. I am depressed and feel no motivation in life. Please tell me how to make them change their mind.

You cannot legally go against your parents' wishes as you are underage. Try to understand just why they are objecting and address their fears. It may not be that they feel possessive about you; you are indeed very young and cannot envisage

realistically the difficulties of living away from home.

Study hard in the coming couple of years now and show them in small ways that you are emotionally and mentally mature to live independently. Get the help of older influential friends and relatives to press your case. If it all fails, you can go abroad a couple of years later to do a postgrad course.

I am the youngest of three siblings, 13 years old and a wheat complexioned, short girl. My parents and my elder brother and sister are tall and very fair. In fact, I do not look as if I belong to the family at all! My friends tease me that I am an adopted child, and sometimes I wonder if this could be true. I do not know who to ask as both sets of grandparents are no more. My parents of course laugh at my doubts. But sometimes at nights, I am filled with questions. I only want to know the truth, nothing more. I love my family a lot. Please advise.

Often some hidden inherited gene becomes evident in a child. You may be resembling some remote aunt or uncle somewhere. Why not accept your parents'



word? They will have no reason surely to hide the truth from you. Relax and bask in the love and intimacy of a good family. The only way you can establish if you really belong to your parents is to do the DNA test, which seems totally uncalled for at this stage. Just laugh off your friends' ribbing without losing your cool. Look around you and you will find many families having a member who is very different from the rest.

I have a very embarrassing problem. I am a quiet and reserved 16-year-old girl, devoted to spirituality, and belonging to a respectable family. For some time now, I have very erotic dreams in which I have affairs and intimate relations with unknown boys! I get up in a state of guilt and remorse, and hate myself for being so cheap. Why is this happening to me when I am not like that in real life? How can I stop such dreams? Do I need a psychiatrist?

Of course, you don't need a psychiatrist! Such dreams are simply manifestations of natural (suppressed) subconscious feelings of being attracted to the other sex and to sexual activity. And this is a normal biological reaction to the increase of sex hormones in the body during adolescence. It is nature's way of awakening sexual interest which is necessary for reproduction and continuation of the human race. It has nothing to do with you. Stop blaming yourself and feeling guilty. For this will only exacerbate your dream activity. Just ignore this and go about your life. Don't be disturbed. You will soon find yourself free of such dreams.

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Readers' Contests

Test Your Knowledge

Selected entries will be published in the forthcoming issue of **Woman's era**. Look out for the **16 October 2016** issue.

Attach a photograph of your friend for a better chance of featuring in **Woman's era**.

Last date for sending entries: **30 September 2016**

1

What Gemstone should never be put in an Ultrasonic cleaner?

- ☐ a. Ruby
- ☐ b. Topaz
- ☐ c. Malachite
- ☐ d. Spinel

2

The most valued colour of Moonstone is?

- ☐ a. Red
- ☐ b. Pink
- ☐ c. Blue
- ☐ d. Purple

3

Tiffany introduced Tanzanite to the market in what Year?

- ☐ a. 1969
- ☐ b. 1954
- ☐ c. 1975
- ☐ d. 1990

4

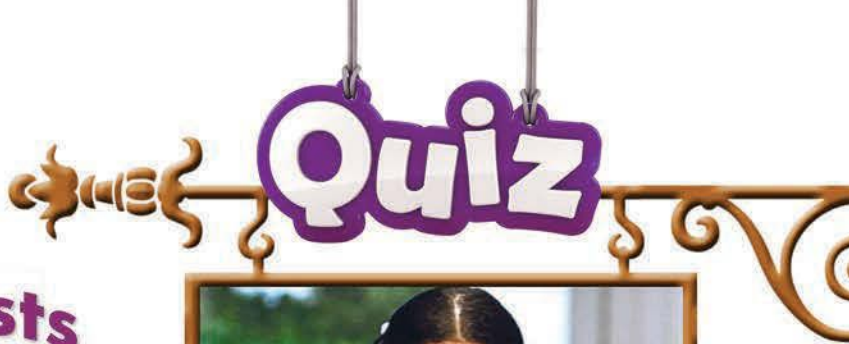
Tanzanite is an official birthstone for the Month of December

- ☐ a. True
- ☐ b. False

5

What colour is Hematite?

- ☐ a. Black
- ☐ b. Dark blue
- ☐ c. Shades of green
- ☐ d. Steel grey



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Don't forget to attach a photograph

1. Mark the answers and send us the cutting of this quiz along with this coupon. The last date is 30 September 2016. So hurry up and post it now. 2. The decision of the editor will be final. 3. Depict your true self only. 4. Send a photograph of your own. It may be printed in *Woman's Era*, along with the results. Send to: *Woman's Era*, Delhi Press, E-3, Jhandewala, New Delhi-110 055.

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STONE IN THE SHOE

Dignity in humility. By Anusuya Kashi

A little more jiggling of the foot and she sensed the stone had changed position to some other part of the shoe where it did not bother her walking so, off she went again, racing past the senior citizens who seemed to be just shuffling across the track.

As Anusha built up speed on her morning walk in the park, she suddenly felt something like a tiny stone prodding her foot from inside her walking shoe. She slowed her pace a bit, trying to move her foot within the shoe to get the stone to change position. For a little while, that helped and she got back to her rapid stride. A few moments later, though, again she could feel the pebble lodged between her heel and shoe, causing great discomfort as she walked. A little more jiggling of the foot and she sensed the stone had changed position to some other part of the shoe where it did not bother her walking so, off she went again, racing past the senior citizens who seemed to be just shuffling across the track.

And then, suddenly, she almost screamed in pain for

the stone had lodged in the space between her toe and the toe ring. Now, the pain was so bad that she had to stop. She tried jiggling her foot, angling it this way and that, all to no avail. Finally, she sat down on one of the seats in the park, took off her shoe completely, tilted it upside down and even hit it against the pavement to get the offending object out. For the twentieth time that week, she decided she must get herself a new pair of walking shoes.

As she passed other walkers in the park, she could not but help notice their shoes. Shivam had elegant sneakers on...they seemed to exude such a casual, understated luxury ...just like the rest of the man's attire that totally synced with his regal bearing. As he passed by her on the walking track, she heard him speaking over his Bluetooth headset, and it seemed like he was coaxing someone into waiting some more for a payment due from him.

As she walked on, there seemed to be a commotion at the park gate and it centred on a young couple

who had just alighted from a bike and were having a heated argument. She pressed closer to the crowd to have a look and the first thing that struck her was the gorgeous pumps the girl was wearing. What she wouldn't give to own a pair of those mind-blowing glamorous red suede shoes! The next thing that struck her was that the quarrel seemed to be turning nasty and she tried to intervene on the girl's behalf, but old Mrs Kamini pinched her elbow hard, pulled her aside and advised not to get involved. She said the two were lovers who had been coming to the park for the past few months but that of late, there seemed to be more angst than love between them.

Feeling chastised, Anusha put her head down and her gaze at once wandered to the frayed flat *chappals* that Mrs Kamini was wearing. They were an old design and looked worn. Mrs Kamini obviously had no great choice in shoes. As they walked together, Anusha listened to her companion talk of having to cut short her morning walk to attend a meeting at the orphanage that was located across the park, she was a volunteer there and at today's meeting, they were to plan for a fund-raiser that they hoped would get them funds to sustain kids.

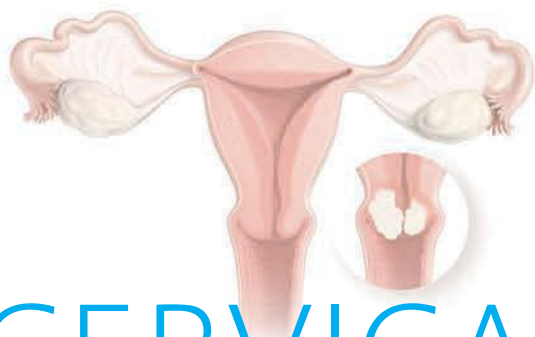
We

What we achieve inwardly will change outer reality.

Finally, she sat down on one of the seats in the park, took off her shoe completely, tilted it upside down and even hit it against the pavement to get the offending object out.

Rajesh.na





CERVICAL CANCER

This is the second largest type of cancer found among women in India, the top being breast cancer.

By Puneet Yadav



On the occasion of tenth anniversary of cervical cancer prevention of India, a scientific symposium was organized in the capital on creating awareness about cervical cancer. Woman's Era was invited on the occasion for a one-to-one interaction with Dr Gerry Wain, Director of Gynecological Oncology at Westmead Hospital, Sydney along with Dr Anupam Sachdeva, Senior Consultant and Head, Pediatric Hematology Oncology & BMT, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi. Excerpts from conversation.

What is cervical cancer and how actually does it occur?

The cervix is the opening of the uterus, the neck of the womb at the top of the vagina and is very sensitive opening. If it becomes infected with the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) and if that virus stays there then the surface of the cell lining of the cervix becomes abnormal with uncontrolled growth and then it develops into

cancer. So, this infection is a very common infection and around 85 per cent of the world population has evidence of HPV at some point in their life. It's transmitted sexually from men to women or women to men. As soon as someone becomes sexually active there is a risk of developing infection because it is transmitted around population.

Most of the times the virus clears up and disappears but sometimes for whatever reasons it doesn't disappear and if it stays long enough it can develop these changes which eventually can turn into cancer. That cancer can be picked up by some screening techniques known as Pap smear test and then that can be treated and prevented from turning into cancer.

If it's not picked up by some sort of screening techniques then it can go on to form true cancer like in the form of bleeding, abnormalities, pain, discomfort and that person eventually dies

If the person is treated for cervical cancer then what is the probability of getting that disease again.

It depends on stage, how successful the treatment has been, if you got advanced cancer then the treatment might not be successful and you can die. If you get treated at precancerous stage and the treatment has been 100% successful then there is not so much of chance of getting it again.

What is the average age of getting infected by this virus.

Dr Anupam Sachdeva: It's relatively present in young women so the age is late 30s and early 40s, so it's very important in terms of women's life because those young women at that time are mothers and wife and dying due to cervical cancer is a major concern. The infection starts developing into late teenage age. Any woman who is sexually active has the chances of getting infected by the HPV virus.

**What is done under Pap smear test?
How is HPV vaccination done?**

We need to do vaginal examination of the cervix. We need an instrument to insert into the vagina to expose the cervix and then take sample of cervix. We scrape the cell peel from the cervix, wipe it on the slide and then it goes to pathologist who sends it to laboratory and experts in laboratory looks every cell under microscope. It's a complicated procedure and each laboratory has very experienced expert who examines for abnormal cells. Usually the results come in one week. If there is abnormality in the cells then the woman is called back for further examinations. HPV vaccination is basically course of two to three injections over six months. We go to school and vaccinate girls and then come for second and third time in those six months.

What is the scenario of cervical cancer in India?

Neither the urban nor the rural woman is much aware of cervical cancer. There are nearly 1 lakh 30 thousand new cervical cancer patient every year. Cervical cancer was the highest cancer among women a year ago but now breast cancer has taken a leap over it not because the cases of cervical cancer has come down but because of breast cancer going up. Out of 1 lakh 30 thousand new cervical cancer cases nearly 65000 to 75000 patients die. The reason is either the disease has too advanced or they didn't approach at the nearby health facility at the early stage.

Why women don't come for check-up in hospital? Is there any taboo related to it.

There is no as such taboo related to this. The thing is when you consider the whole population of India, how many of them actually approach the hospital for diagnosis when they are ill. You may access a health facility once you go there, The person examines you and tells that you need a Pap smear or a small biopsy and that's the end of the story and you go back home and never come. What we receive in the hospital and we make

the data from this is skewed data because we are not actually looking at the population statistics and that is the important thing to understand for us.

Will the sex life be affected after the treatment? What are the side effects of the treatment?

Dr Gerry Wain: It depends on the treatment. Sometimes the side effects make it difficult to have a happy sexual life. But if the disease is treated in its precancerous stage with a minor procedure then there is no such difficulty in sexual activity. The side effects of radiation are very serious. It can damage the wall, the bladder, it can cause menopause. It can even cause scars around the vagina. Radiation can destroy ovary. Some of them can cause long-term side effects. So, the radiation is very substantial and yes the treatment is very costly (interrupts Dr Anupam Sachdeva) and that's why 70,000 women die of it because they can't afford it



Dr Anupam Sachdeva, Senior Consultant and Head, Pediatric Hematology Oncology & BMT, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital, New Delhi.



Dr Gerry Wain, Director of Gynecological Oncology at Westmead Hospital, Sydney.

What is government doing for it? Is government running any programme for it?

The government doesn't have any special hospital for this disease. It is taken as a part of cancer. It does have a screening programme in the form of Pap smear test. Again, only 1 to 2 per cent of population accesses the facility. Unfortunately, we don't have any facility to really call in a big way as programmatic approach and even if we do have that Pap smear test then that is more on paper than actually accessible by the patients. We have everything in our country, the budget, etc. The thing depends on how many patients are turning up for pap smear test, how many women are coming for mammography test, how many women are coming for HPV vaccination. There is a lack of knowledge, lack of preventive attitude among women and that's why India is adding up one third of the cervical cancer in the whole world.

How can we prevent cervical cancer?

HPV vaccination at young age is the major preventive measure from cervical cancer. It can totally eradicate cervical cancer. The another being Pap smear test it's not for prevention, but it can help in detecting the disease at an early stage or in precancerous stage so that patient doesn't suffer and even the treatment expenditure also becomes less, your ovaries don't get eradicated, you uterus is not removed and all the long-term effects can be prevented just because of early detection of precancerous stage of cervical cancer. After the age of 21 year each woman should go for regular Pap smear test till the age of 65. Thirteen is the best age for girl to get vaccinated for HPV. Whenever a woman comes for Pap smear test she should take along her young daughter to get vaccinated. Whenever a woman delivers a baby she should get her vaccinated. Actually that is the best time to educate the mother regarding vaccination and Pap smear test.

We

The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.



Sushant Singh Rajput has never shied away from taking risks, be it his stint on the small screen or taking a plunge into Bollywood with offbeat films like *Kai Po Che!* and *Detective Byomkesh Bakshy!*. The actor says he craves for excitement in life, adding that for him "risks are essential but very overrated".

Asked about the transformation as an individual and as an actor over time, he said it was "seamless", adding that it is a false perception that theatres to films is a natural progression. It's our perception that theatre to films is a natural progression but it's not. As an actor your job is the same. You need to pretend to be on the level of belief. I crave for excitement in my life and it happens only when I pick films and characters that I can't comprehend completely at first," Sushant said. He added: "Excitement comes in the process of understanding it.

Sushant Singh Rajput has never shied any from taking risk.

This bit of news will certainly make you dance with joy. Looks like Kareena Kapoor-Khan will not let her pregnancy come in the way of a meaty role.

Reacting to media reports that stated that the actress might quit *Veere Di Wedding*, following her ill-health and pregnancy, the actress has issued a official statement that reads, "We are going to shoot for a couple of days in October. Then I will pick up the film post delivery. I am definitely doing the film. We are working on how and when we can shoot."

The film, a girl-bonding saga, will reportedly star Sonam Kapoor, Kareena Kapoor, Swara Bhaskar, and newcomer Shikha Talsania, another entertainment web portal stated. Now that the actress is all set to star in the chick-flick, should we breathe a sigh of relief? Or wait for the movie to actually start rolling?

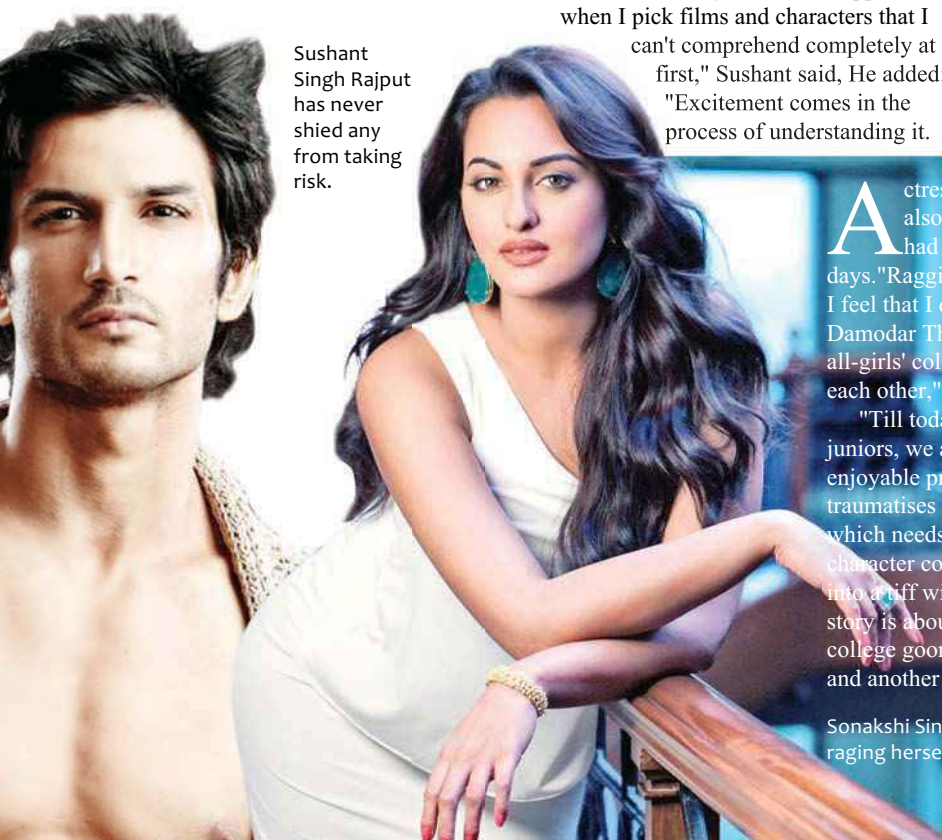
It will be co-produced by Sonam's sister Rhea Kapoor and Ekta Kapoor.

The *Dhoom* franchise is getting bigger with every instalment. For *Dhoom 4*, the makers had Salman Khan in mind. After he turned down the offer citing reasons of his own, they have shifted focus to Shah Rukh Khan. As opposed to Salman, SRK has no reservations in playing an antagonist on celluloid as he has done it quite a few times before and nailed it. The *Fan* actor is figuring out the remuneration bit of the project, reported DNA and an official announcement is awaited of all falls in

Actress Sonakshi Sinha, whose recent film *Akira* also touches upon the subject of ragging, says she had faced ragging herself during her college days. "Ragging is touched upon greatly in the film (*Akira*). I feel that I did go through it in SNDT (Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University), which is an all-girls' college but it was a way of making friends with each other," Sonakshi said here.

"Till today, people who ragged me or I ragged my juniors, we are still friends. I think it should be an enjoyable process to everyone and not something that traumatises a student or a child for life. That's something which needs to be taken care of." *Akira* sees Sonakshi's character coming to Mumbai from Jodhpur, where she gets into a tiff with the goons of the college she enrolls in. The story is about her fight to come out of a case, where the college goons, this corrupt cop played by Anurag Kashyap and another Konkona Sen Sharma play crucial roles.

Sonakshi Sinha says she has faced raging herself.



place, Shah Rukh will play a thief (just like John Abraham, Hrithik Roshan and Aamir Khan did previously) and chasing him around will be Ranveer Singh as ACP Jay Dixit, a part that Abhishek Bachchan played to perfection all these years. Interestingly Uday Chopra who played the other cop will also sit out.

Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh reckons Akshay Kumar as the most energetic actor in the industry.

If you talk about energy, the name that immediately comes in our mind is Akshay Kumar. He lives such a healthy lifestyle. He does not smoke or drink, early riser, regular workouts," Ranveer said on Monday. When asked how much he enjoys the name 'Ranveer Superstar Singh' which has been tagged to him, he said, "Thank you... I take that as a compliment. I am very thankful for all the good works coming my way and most of all is the love of the audience."

Reportedly Ranveer might work for the third time in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's *Padmavati* (after *Ramleela* and *Bajirao Mastani*), but he said he is not able to speak about any of his upcoming projects.

The something relevant about my upcoming projects, I will be the first person to let you know," he told the media. In his forthcoming releases, Singh is all set to release his film *Befikre* that is directed by Aditya Chopra. So far, the posters of the film have made much noise because of the passionate lip lock between Vaani Kapoor and Ranveer Singh.

After way too many speculations and stories in the media, Arbaaz Khan has finally admitted to being separated from his wife Malaika Arora to a leading web site.

When the estranged couple was spotted together recently, there were rumours that they were working on their marriage. Ironically the couple were jointly hosting a relationship-based show on Sony when the news of the break-up happened.

But that sure doesn't seem to be the case, well as per Arbaaz at least. He told a leading daily recently, "At this



Ranveer says Akshay behind his energy.

point of time we (Malaika and I) are not together, we are separated, and that's about it. Obviously, the director-producer was asked by the site about brother Salman's nuptial rumours with

Romanian beauty Lulia Vantur. "We've been hearing about his marriage since his first year in films, he'll get married when he has to," he replied to the daily.

Are Aditya Roy and Katrina Kaif seeing each other?



Bollywood never ceases to surprise us. Because there's news floating in that the *Fitoor* pair Katrina Kaif and Aditya Roy Kapoor are seeing each other, an entertainment web portal has reported.

Apparently, on a recent world tour, the two became rather close, what with spending time during rehearsals, performances and in-between as well, the site added.

The two have always shared an easy chemistry, even when Kat was in a steady relationship with Ranbir Kapoor. Now that they have parted ways, this new pair does seem like an exciting option, eh? But is this only a rebound for Kat or something more meaningful? Hmmmm.

Aditya was rumoured to be seeing Shraddha Kapoor while shooting for their mega hit *Aashiqui 2*. However, she's allegedly dating Farhan Akhtar, according to a popular gossip portal.

On the work front, Kat has all our expectations pinned on *Baar Baar Dekho*, while Aditya is said to be shooting for *Ok jaanu*.

Whatever it is, Kat-Adi sure look incredibly gorgeous together. Say what, fans?

— Anil Merani.

I am one of two twin sisters, the only children of our parents who brought us up with great love and care. We are identical twins, but I was always the smarter and more intelligent of the two of us. So, I got into medical college and became a gynaecologist while my twin barely managed to graduate.

In spite of the differences between us, my twin and I have always been very close and we decided long ago that we would get married on the same day. Our parents also wanted this and when I completed my postgraduation, they began to look for matches for us.

At this time I told them two things. The first was that I had found a match for myself, a fellow doctor who worked in the same hospital as I did and the second was that I was being sent abroad by my hospital for training for six months. My parents told me to go abroad and said that when I return, they would celebrate the weddings of their daughters.

I spent a very useful six months abroad and came back to India, keen to meet the man who was going to be my brother-in-law. I already knew that he was a civil engineer and when my parents met me at the airport, they told me that it had been love at first sight for both him and my sister. In fact, she hadn't come to meet me because it was her fiancé's birthday and they had gone out together. When I heard this I felt very happy for my sister.

When I met her fiancé and talked to him, I suddenly felt breathless. Soon after that I realised that I had fallen in love with him at first sight. But it was also clear to me that he and my sister were very happy together.

Now, I know that if I don't get this man, I will die. I also know that if I propose to him, he will give up my sister and marry me because I am after all a doctor. I also know that my sweet sister will not stand in the way of my happiness. As far as my own fiancé is concerned, he does not matter to me at all.

You seem to have been arrogant and self-centred from a young age, but a redeeming feature you had then, was that you loved your sister. Even that plus point has disappeared and you are exposed as totally self-absorbed and selfish.

It is high time that you begin to think of others and not just of yourself. Do not interfere with your sister's happiness. Allow her to marry the man she loves and who loves her. But tell your parents that you do not want to get married as yet.

Break off with the man you are engaged to because it is clear that you do not love him. Instead, devote yourself to your career and marry only when you find someone you genuinely love.

I am a married 30-year-old woman. I come from an upper-middle-class family and am the youngest of three children. I have an elder brother who is six years older than I am and an elder sister who is four years older.

My elder sister is 34 years old. She got married when she was 27 years old and she had completed her engineering. Now, she has a daughter who is five years old. My brother who is 36, is a businessman. He got married six years ago and has a son also aged five.

I am the youngest in my family, but I have studied the least and have the oldest children.

This is because I fell in love at the age of eighteen and insisted on getting married as soon as I completed my standard twelve exams. Now, I have a son aged ten and a daughter aged 8. The man I fell in love with is just a few months older and was my classmate. He came from a very ordinary family and his father was a welder. My husband gave up studying after marriage and began to earn a living to provide for the two of us.

Now, I am very unhappy and feel that I have messed up my life. I am furious with my parents because they should have stopped me from taking all the crucial decisions I took which ruined my life. They should have coaxed, cajoled and scolded me into waiting till I graduated from college before I got married.

Personal Problems

I agree that I was foolish and headstrong but they are my parents and should have been firm. Instead, they just spoke to me once or twice and then gave in.

I am also angry with my brother and sister. They are after all just a bit older than I am. So, they should have understood me, and explained things to me.

Make no mistake, I still love my husband and am happy as far as he is concerned.

But I feel that I will not be able to give my children the start in life that my siblings will be able to give their children.

Yes, your parents should have tried harder and somehow stopped you from getting married before you completed your education. Your siblings too should have explained things to you in a manner you could understand.

Anyway, there is no use dwelling on the past now. What you must do now is to think of future of your children. They must study well and become something in life.

Do not be ashamed to ask for help from your parents and siblings. But do not demand it as a right or in anger.

You should also consider you and your husband doing courses that will help you improve the quality of your life and make it possible for you to guide and help your children more. You could also take up a job now and then get a better one after completing a course of some kind.

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IMPACT OF FOODS ON BLOOD SUGAR

Nutritious ideas
for diabetics.

By Mala Ashok

India has the dubious distinction of being the diabetes capital of the world. More and more people are being diagnosed with diabetes, tens of thousands of people go undiagnosed, leading their lives blissfully unaware of the pitfalls of the disease. As such, it is wise for all of us to follow a diabetes- friendly diet.

Some foods have a bigger impact on your blood sugar than others. Knowing which ones are the best for keeping blood sugar levels steady is especially important when you have diabetes, but it's a good idea for everyone. Your dietary goal is to choose foods that help keep your blood sugar level on an even keel. That typically means whole, minimally processed foods. Here are some of the best foods that stabilise – or even lower – your blood sugar so you can better manage your diabetes.



Looking for a diabetes-friendly food? Follow Popeye's example. We in India are very fortunate that we get leafy greens in a variety – *methi, palak, sarson...*, around the year and they are very inexpensive too. Leafy greens are loaded with vitamins, such as folate; minerals such as magnesium; a range of phyto-nutrients; and insoluble fibre. These do not increase your blood sugar level. Mark Hyman, MD, author of *The Blood Sugar Solution* (Little, Brown and Company), calls leafy greens "free foods," which means you should eat as many of them as you can. Bonus: the fibre in leafy greens will slow the absorption of any carbohydrates (e.g., potatoes or rice) they're paired with, resulting in a healthier overall glycemic load. Yes, *alu methi* is healthy.

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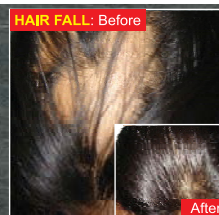
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Nuts of all sorts – walnuts, pistachios, make your choice – are great for controlling blood sugar. Despite their diminutive size, nuts are power packages of protein, unsaturated (healthy) fat, and fibre.

Those three factors have a positive impact on blood sugar levels. In a recent study, participants who ate 2½ ounces of nuts daily had an 8 per cent decrease in their HbA1c levels. Simply put, HbA1c measures the blood sugar control over a three-month period and is a very good indicator of how well you are managing your diabetes. Keep in mind that these nuts also pack plenty of calories. Your best bet is to substitute nuts for high-carbohydrate foods. Sprinkle them on yogurt and salads, or nibble them for a snack.

Hummus, a Middle Eastern specialty, is a great addition to a diabetes-friendly plate. The fibre and protein in chickpeas – 12 grams of dietary fibre and 15 grams of protein per cup – help regulate the absorption of the sugars from the starch, so your blood sugar stays on an even keel. The healthy fats from the *tahini* (made from ground sesame seeds) and olive oil showers the absorption of sugars even more. Pair your hummus with vegetables and wholegrain crackers for an even greater effect. If you prefer an Indian version stick to the tried and tested *channa* – but try to avoid white-flour *bhature* with your *Chhole* and opt for rotis instead.



If you have diabetes, be sure there's cinnamon in your spice rack. Studies have shown that as little as a teaspoon of cinnamon a day may significantly decrease fasting blood glucose levels and increase insulin sensitivity. There are lots of ways to add more cinnamon to your diet. Sprinkle some in your coffee, stir it into your morning oatmeal, or be liberal with it in your *masalas*.

Lentils (*dals*) are smart legumes when managing your blood sugar. They contain a good amount of starch (normally a no-no if managing blood sugar), which gives them a satisfying, hearty creaminess. Lentils are also packed with both soluble and insoluble dietary fibre. Soluble fibre turns into a gel-like consistency during digestion, which slows absorption of the sugar molecules in the starch. Insoluble fibre passes through the digestive tract without "registering" as a carbohydrate, while slowing down the whole digestive process so that you stay satisfied and your blood sugar remains steady.



Quinoa is a supergrain for many reasons. It's one of the few non-animal proteins that's considered a complete protein in that it has all of the essential amino acids your body needs to build protein molecules. Plus, quinoa is a whole grain with germ, endosperm, and bran intact, bringing a host of nutrients and healthy fat to the mix. Even better, all those benefits come with very little impact on your blood sugar level. Half-cup of cooked quinoa ranks just under 10 (that's low!) on the glycemic load scale. It's easy to add quinoa to meals. Try using it in place of white rice. This is now available in India though it sells on the more expensive side. However, for vegetarians it is a necessary food periodically.



Pasta has become an Indian favourite, particularly with children. Are the comforting bowls of pasta off your menu because you have diabetes? Think again. "Wholegrain pastas are a great source of B vitamins and fibre, and reduce inflammation in the blood vessels," says a nutritionist. However, this food does come with a couple of warning flags. First, overcooking pasta raises its glycemic load (follow the package directions and pull the pasta off the heat when it's *al dente*). Second, beware of portion size. A good bet is to pair ½ to one cup of cooked pasta with a bevy of vegetables and a bit of lean protein and healthy fat for a dish that's easy on your blood sugar.



When you savour the peppery zing of extra-virgin olive oil, you taste powerful antioxidants. The phytonutrients that bring the bite also have an antiinflammatory effect on your body. This helps protect and repair the cardiovascular system, which will constant fluctuations in blood sugar can damage. Olive oil is also incredibly versatile. It's appropriate for anything from salads to sautés. Best of all, it slows absorption of the carbohydrates it's paired with for a healthier glycemic load overall. Note however that olive oil has a very low flash point. So, it cannot be used for deep-frying Indian food. Use olive oil in combination with, say, safflower oil to combat this problem.



As nutritionists become more and more aware of this insidious disease there is more counselling available to manage diabetes. There is no reason why you cannot live a long and productive life just by following a few healthy and nutritional tips.

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TO KEEP THE PROMISE

Narayanan almost died to do it. By N. Srinivasan

Ranuga, the actress was 25 years old and married and she had been a dream girl for youngsters till some years ago and her fans thronged the city theatres to see her on the wide screen. She had left her field so as to help Narayanan to lure the voters with her charm during the election time.

Eighty-two-year-old Ramgopal owned a textile mill and half a dozen garment manufacturing units in the city. He was lying on his sick bed and it was Sunday night. Earlier that day, a panel of doctors had examined him and declared that he would live for a week and not a day more.

The old man wished to see his only son, 50-year-old Narayanan, and daughter-in-law Parvathi, 40 years old, and have a few words with them. So they came in and took their seats, the son on the bed beside his father and daughter-in-law on a chair nearby.

Ramgopal took his son's hands into his, coughed twice and then said, "Dear son, no one can cure my illness and I am past that stage. However, I am not worried about death. I have earned enough money to last for many generations and I am happy to say that I am leaving everything for you."

After saying this, the old man hesitated a little, looked around and then continued, "I want you to promise me one thing and that is contesting and winning an assembly seat.

The state assembly members have the real power and I want you to have it. As you both know well, all my life I tried to win a seat. I donated liberally to a party and they allowed me to stand for election as their party candidate from a city constituency. I contested and lost it.

"Then I tried twice as an independent candidate from the same constituency, but was defeated on both occasions. Though I have been rich and have given employment and homes to live in to thousands of men and women, I did not get the respect I deserved just because I was not able to win an assembly seat." Saying this, the old man wept and the son wept too along with the daughter-in-law.

Then the old man said, "So, I want you to promise

me that you will do all that is needed to win a seat. You could form your own party if there is no other way."

"Dad, I promise you I will contest and win an assembly seat at any cost," said Narayanan.

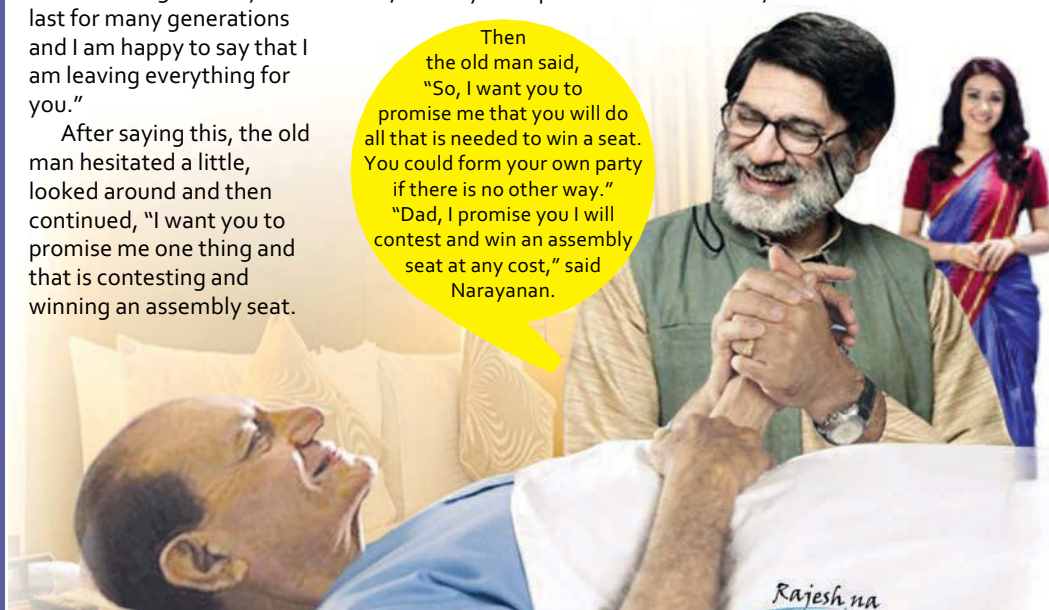
Then Narayanan and his spouse bent over the sick man and put their hands on him in a consoling way and then they left for their room.

Ramgopal died on the seventh day exactly and was buried with full honours.

Narayanan waited for almost five years before starting his party. He named it The Party for the Downtrodden (R) and 'R' referred to his father. He was the party president and the popular actress Ranuga became the party's general secretary. She had joined after donating liberally for the general election.

Narayanan had two sons

Then the old man said, "So, I want you to promise me that you will do all that is needed to win a seat. You could form your own party if there is no other way." "Dad, I promise you I will contest and win an assembly seat at any cost," said Narayanan.



and both were now married and settled somewhere in the city. The textile mill and the garment manufacturing units were running well and he visited them once a week.

Ranuga, the actress was 25 years old and married and she had been a dream girl for youngsters till some years ago and her fans thronged the city theatres to see her on the wide screen. She had left her field so as to help Narayanan to lure the voters with her charm during the election time.

When the general election came, Narayanan keeping in mind the promise made to his father, contested from his home constituency, the eastern part of the town. There was a crowd at the election meetings but they were not much interested in hearing his speech as to see the glamour woman Ranuga on the stage and hear her promises.

Narayanan's speech promised the voters good things if he was voted to power, but this did not have any effect on them. But when the actress spoke they cheered her, but that too did not turn into votes and he was defeated.

A party leader close to Narayanan commented on the opponent's victory.

"Besides being a labour leader he is lean and has a hungry look about him. It helped him a lot to get the sympathy votes and win the election."

Narayanan heard the comment and the word 'sympathy votes' impressed him much. The Party for the Underprivileged, the ruling party, won the election and

came to power once again. Narayanan's party could win only 50 seats.

He did not lose heart and was prepared to wait till the next general election.

It was six months after the election. Narayanan's party was now one of the main opposition parties in the assembly. Then two things happened simultaneously. A Parliament member belonging to the ruling party at the centre died after a heart attack while travelling on board an Indian airliner. Also, an assembly member, one Ramakrishnan, elected from the western city constituency and from the ruling party tendered his resignation following the report that he had diverted the funds allotted to his constituency for his own use. A Narayanan's party member had raised the issue in the assembly. So, both seats became vacant.

Ranuga, the glamour woman, had an eye on the Parliament seat. She would be nominated to the seat, Narayanan assured her. He himself would file his nomination for the assembly seat after the announcement of by-elections.

He assured himself that in the next general election his party would get an absolute majority so as to form the government and as the party president he would assume the chief ministership.

One day, Narayanan phoned Ranuga and the time was five in the evening. He asked her to meet him immediately.

Ranuga had no driver of her own and so she used to drive the car herself. It came

through Narayanan's bungalow gate at six pm exactly.

The couple stood on their doorstep and greeted the actress-turned-politician warmly when she got down from her car.

Ranuga looked fine in a blue silk sari with a matching low-cut blouse. She also wore a sparkling diamond necklace that enhanced her beauty. Parvathi knew that her husband felt attracted to

"Drunkenness leads to other evil things too. Newspaper reports mention the stabbing incidents in the bars. They kill each other at the slightest provocation. What I am suggesting is some steps in the right direction to force them to impose prohibition."

that married woman. She also knew a rumour was going around to the effect that Narayanan was having an affair with the lady. She would find out the truth one day, she told herself.

However, she assured herself that her husband was not like her father-in-law who had been a womaniser.

Parvathi led the actress into the bungalow and Narayanan followed them. Ranuga sat down on a sofa and Narayanan followed suit and sat beside her on the sofa. Then Parvathi brought a plate of biscuits and placed it on the sofa. Ranuga took a biscuit and nibbled at it.

Then Narayanan said, "As you know well, the by-

election is coming soon. So, we have to do something to get people's attention. Do you have anything on your mind?"

"Young men are being spoiled now to a large extent by the liquor sale in the state. There are liquor shops in the villages too," said Ranuga. Then Parvathi came and she carefully placed the tea cups on the sofa.

"So let us arrange a fast," said Ranuga sipping her tea. Narayanan too took his tea.

"Something happened the other night in my neighbourhood," continued Ranuga. "A habitual drunkard came straight from a bar and passing his door knocked at his neighbour's. The lady of the house opened the door thinking it was her own husband returning home as usual after work. She had not switched on the light. The drunk came in and hugged the lady from behind. At first, she did not resist and she then smelt boozy breath and was shocked. She snatched herself from the man and switched on the light and found to her dismay and horror that the man indeed was her neighbour. She gave him a good thrashing and drove him out. He staggered out of the house and the time was ten. The husband was yet to return from office." Ranuga did not finish what she had to say.

Parvathi interrupted her, "Then someone saw him coming out of the house and promptly reported it to the husband. Is it so?" asked Parvathi.

"Yes, some other neighbour saw the man but it was not leaked out to the

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husband by the neighbour but by the lady herself. She told her husband about the incident amidst sobs and now the husband has changed his office routine and comes home before six in the evening," said Ranuga and Parvathi laughed.

"Such things happen all the time and it is not a laughing matter," said Narayanan looking at his wife. "Drunkenness leads to other evil things too. Newspaper reports mention the stabbing incidents in the bars. They kill each other at the slightest provocation.

What I am suggesting is some steps in the right direction to force them to impose prohibition."

Narayanan then turned towards Ranuga and said, "Just pass the news around to the women in your area that we are observing one day's fast in front of the liquor shop on the Big Bazaar Street on Monday and I ask you to collect as many women as possible for the event."

"That is a good thing to do under the circumstances. Don't worry, sir. I will do it," said Ranuga. She then left the house.

When Ranuga had been busy discussing the fast, two men were scheming. Each was at his own home thinking. One was Ranuga's husband Vikram, a dance master who was popular in the film. They had a five-year-old child.

Vikram did not like his wife Ranuga moving closely with Narayanan right from the very beginning when he happened to see in a newspaper, the picture showing them together at a party function. In fact, he had objected to her joining the party at the first

instance and wanted her to continue in films. But Ranuga protested and said, "I have acted in 150 films already and I am no more the glamour girl I used to be."

"You can do family roles and earn some more money," he advised but she was not ready for that and so quarrels cropped up occasionally at first and then it became a regular feature. Vikram was scheming hard so that, leaving the party, she would be at his beck and call.

Another one who was scheming against the party was Ramakrishnan, the ex-assembly member from the ruling party who had resigned the membership in protest against a remark made by a member of Narayanan's party in the assembly. As everyone knew now, the remark related to the misutilisation of the government funds allotted to his constituency. Ramakrishnan was waiting for an opportunity to do something nasty and spoil the image of Narayanan's party.

The fast started at eight in the morning on an open ground just opposite the liquor shop. It seemed at first there was no untoward incident. Now and then, volunteers supplied water bottles to the fasting women. The two leaders in the front row observed the fast sincerely and they had no occasion to look back and as such they were not aware of anything untoward happening in their midst.

When it was past midday a few men disguised as party men distributed food packets to the women at the back row. The women in the

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row, though embarrassed at first on seeing the packets, just managed to pass them around. A news photographer used the occasion to take some snapshots of the women and then he slipped away.

Only some packets were distributed when a woman raised an objection. So there was some commotion and everyone stood up. In the confusion that followed the men who supplied the food packets disappeared.

Narayanan and the party secretary hearing the noise came to the spot and enquired. Then they moved to their seats and the rally ended at 9 o'clock as planned.

"The fast is a complete failure. The women spoiled the event by having a lunch break," an evening newspaper reported. All other papers besides reporting the rally as a complete failure carried the picture which clearly showed that the women were passing food packets around.

"The men disguised as our party men were from the ruling party and they foisted the food packets on our unsuspecting women," Narayanan later reported to the media but no one believed him.

Narayanan knew the person responsible for disrupting the fast. It was Ramakrishnan himself, the ex-assembly member from the ruling party and Narayanan managed to find out the truth. Then he remembered the promise he had made to his old man at his deathbed. He had to rebuild his lost image if he was to win the coming by-election. He did not know

how to do it now. The date for the by-election was announced. Narayanan filed his papers for the western city assembly seat and Ranuga, the party secretary, the vacant Parliament seat. The Parliament constituency was outside the city limit. The ruling party candidates were contesting for the seats too.

Then the election campaign started. Meetings were held in both constituencies and Narayanan and Ranuga addressed them.

Narayanan used to have a morning walk every day. Though he was busy now in the election campaign, he did not change his routine. That morning, Narayanan as usual came out of his residence at six. His pet dog, a Pomeranian, followed him through the gate wagging its tail.

He walked slowly towards the public park maintained using the funds contributed by Morning Walkers, an association. The dog usually avoided going too close to his master but followed him discreetly at a distance. Narayanan was only 100 feet away from the park which was at the corner. As he did not even look back he was not aware of the thugs following him and his dog closely.

They took care of the dog first. They handled the creature in a skilful way and did not even allow it to bark. After silencing the dog they put it into a gunny bag they carried and dropped it in a roadside garbage bin. This task was finished within a minute and Narayanan, not knowing it, kept on walking and no other passer-by was

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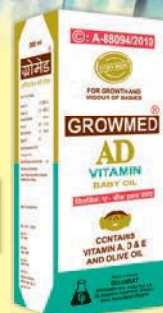
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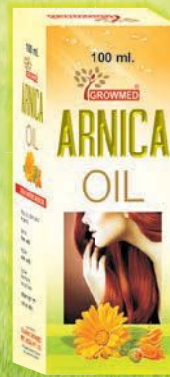
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seen on the street and it had a deserted look.

Then the hooligans, a half a dozen teenagers, fell on him. They carried iron rods and penknives. It seemed that they were not well trained in combat skills but they managed it well. One of them struck Narayanan on his head and shoulders. Another one using his fist made a punch on his cheek and then changing his direction hit his nose. A cheekbone cracked and blood oozed from the nose.

Then, another one, possibly a school dropout, rushed towards Narayanan and started stabbing him with a pen knife on the back a number of times. After that, the thugs regroped and renewed their attack.

Narayanan tried to protect himself by pushing them but could not manage. However, he continued to walk on though they were still hitting him. Then he fell down and they dragged him to a side alley and laid him there on the ground. By this time, Narayanan had lost his consciousness and leaving him there they ran away. A sweeper found him some time later and reported it to the police.

The evening papers were prompt in reporting the incident. The next morning, Ranuga the general secretary of The Party, for the Downtrodden (R), was at the entrance to the hospital busy answering the questions posed by newsmen.

"Yes, it was an attempt on his life so that he would not stand in the way of the men in power who are out to spoil our menfolk with the liquor sales," she said.

Ranuga had been the first to visit the hospital. Narayanan was in an intensive care unit and Parvathi, his spouse, was with him. All other visitors were allowed to see him only through the glass partition.

Leaving Ranuga, the newsmen went to the main lobby of the hospital. The doctor who had admitted Narayanan for treatment explained his condition. "The hooligans have wounded him severely. He has lost blood heavily and I have made arrangements for the blood transfusion. They have struck on his head heavily and I fear the blow has led to some damage to his brain. His cheekbone is cracked and his backbone is damaged

due to the fall. He will not be able to walk for some time now," the doctor added.

The newspapers carried the doctors' report and were full of sympathy for the leader. A leading newspaper reported as follows:

'Narayanan, the president of The Party for the Downtrodden (R), is in a critical condition. It is suspected that the ruling party men planned the assault on him. All his life, he has worked for the poor and the downtrodden and he was against the liquor sale.'

The city folks as well as the people in other areas in the state were full of sympathy for the leader. The papers also reported the people's response to the assault and it was favourable to Narayanan.

Ranuga turned her attention to the by-election and attended meetings in both the Parliament and assembly constituencies. In all such meetings she stressed the point that the hooligans hired by the ruling party men had tried to kill

her party leader. The people gathered at the meetings and believed her and there was a good response to her speech. After a week, Narayanan was able to sit in a wheelchair and address the meetings in his constituency.

On the polling day, Parvathi, Narayanan's wife, accompanied by party men brought him in the wheelchair to a few polling booths for a visit. Public sympathy was in his favour. Voters turned up in large numbers to the booths and exercised their franchise in his favour. Narayanan won the by-election and somehow kept the promise made to his old man at his deathbed. He won the assembly seat with a huge margin and Ranuga won her Parliament seat too.

They had enough time now to work for the next general election.

The culprits were caught after the election results and the boys confessed the truth. Ruling party men were not involved in the attack against Narayanan. It was Vikram, the dance master and husband of the glamour woman Ranuga, who had masterminded the assault. He was arrested later.

Ranuga, now the honourable member of Parliament, left her husband and chose a luxurious apartment to live in with her child.

Narayanan was able to walk after a few months and he avoided the morning stroll now.

Then Narayanan said, "As you know well, the by-election is coming soon. So, we have to do something to get people's attention. Do you have anything on your mind?"

Always remember that you are absolutely unique. Just like everyone else.
— Margaret Mead

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THE INTELLIGENCE OF FARM ANIMALS

It's quite surprising. By Maneka Sanjay Gandhi

Rajji is a goat in my shelter, Sanjay Gandhi Animal Care Centre. He has a gang of his own. All alpha dogs surround him as he walks through the shelter, and sit around him when he perches higher than them on a ledge – a sign that he is their boss. He waits till a few humans start talking and then he saunters over to the group to become a part of their deliberations. Woe betide anyone who tries to pet him. He butts straightaway. I walked around with a sore hip for two weeks after I put my hand on his head to stroke his silky hair. He demands to be treated like a human being and now all our staff does just that.

While most people treat their pets with kindness and respect, farm animals are rarely extended the same treatment even though they are as intelligent and loving as cats and dogs. Thinking that farm animals like goats, chickens, buffaloes, cows and fish are stupid, allows people to rationalise mass-producing and slaughtering of these animals for food. People continue to eat mutton because they feel that the goat is a

Recent experiments have shown that goats are actually very smart. The fact that goats can interact with each other in socially complex ways has

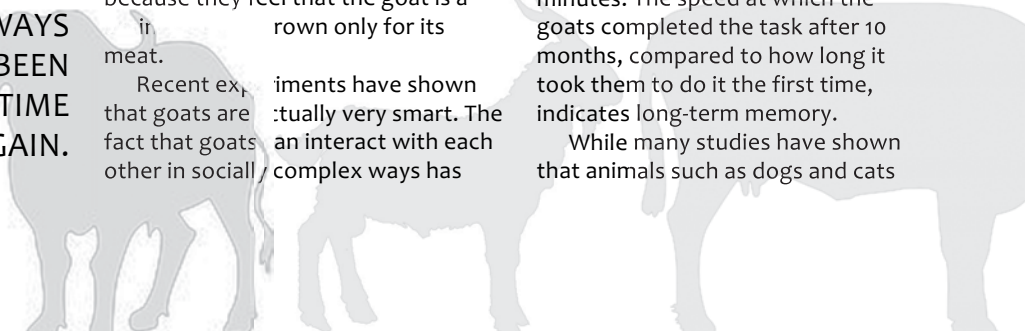
been proven time and again. They develop friendships, form social hierarchies, and are very successful in colonising new environments.

In a string of new experiments, scientists have learnt that goats also have long-term memory (a sign of intelligence), are able to learn a complex task after being shown how to do it a few times. Thief can understand object permanence. They even have the ability to change their speaking accents as per their social surroundings.

A recent study by the researchers at Queen Mary, University of London, and The Institute of Agricultural Science in Switzerland, found that goats have the ability to learn complex tasks and remember them for a long time. Four scientists got 12 goats together and taught them how to open a box of food by pulling and then lifting a lever. After a few tries, the goats learnt how to do it. The same set of goats was quizzed on the task ten months later. Even after all that time, the goats were able to perform the task in less than two minutes. The speed at which the goats completed the task after 10 months, compared to how long it took them to do it the first time, indicates long-term memory.

While many studies have shown that animals such as dogs and cats

RECENT EXPERIMENTS HAVE SHOWN THAT GOATS ARE ACTUALLY VERY SMART. THE FACT THAT GOATS CAN INTERACT WITH EACH OTHER IN SOCIALLY COMPLEX WAYS HAS BEEN PROVEN TIME AND AGAIN.



and various primates reach different stages of object permanence – the understanding that things still exist even after they disappear from view – new findings in the latest issue of Applied Animal Behaviour Science have investigated its existence in goats. Using female Nigerian dwarf goats, the researchers tested the animals' skill in tracking hidden objects in a series of experiments. In one such experiment, the goats watched as a researcher hid an uncooked piece of pasta beneath the same plastic cup several times. When the researcher changed course and hid the pasta, in full sight, under one of the empty cups nearby, the goats were able to successfully find it.

HARDER TIME

In another experiment, the researchers hid the pasta in a plastic cup in front of the goat. They then slid the cup next to another plastic cup – which also contained pasta to prevent the goat from potentially sniffing it out – so that the two cups crossed paths. When the two cups were identical, the researchers observed that the goats had a harder time tracking the food. However, when the cups were of different colours and shapes, more goats were able to find the hidden pasta, implying that the visual cues helped the goats better follow the pasta's path. Keeping track of a relatively tricky trajectory in these experiments, provides the first evidence that dwarf goats have reached a higher stage of object permanence than any other non-primate mammal.

Their determination along with an aptitude for challenges, allows goats to apply these problem-solving skills to help them to reach food other animals wouldn't be able to get to. Goats in Morocco, for instance, are known to climb trees to reach the tastiest branches.

In an experiment to determine whether captive goats seek cognitive challenges, a group of scientists investigated whether the goats continued to operate a learning device to get a reward when the same



reward was available concurrently without any effort. In the first training period, a group of 10 goats were trained to press a button at a water-giver to get 35 ml of drinking water. In a following training period, the goats learned to differentiate between two different visual shapes on a learning device to receive the same amount of water. The water-giver was closed during this second training period. Finally, water was simultaneously available at the water-giver and the learning device for five days. During this period, the goats continued to operate the learning device, showing that when it can choose between working for a reward or taking it with less effort, the goat chooses not to always reach for the easy reward. This study provided evidence that goats search for cognitive challenges beyond the motivation of a reward. Simply put, they like learning for learning's sake.

THE INVESTIGATION

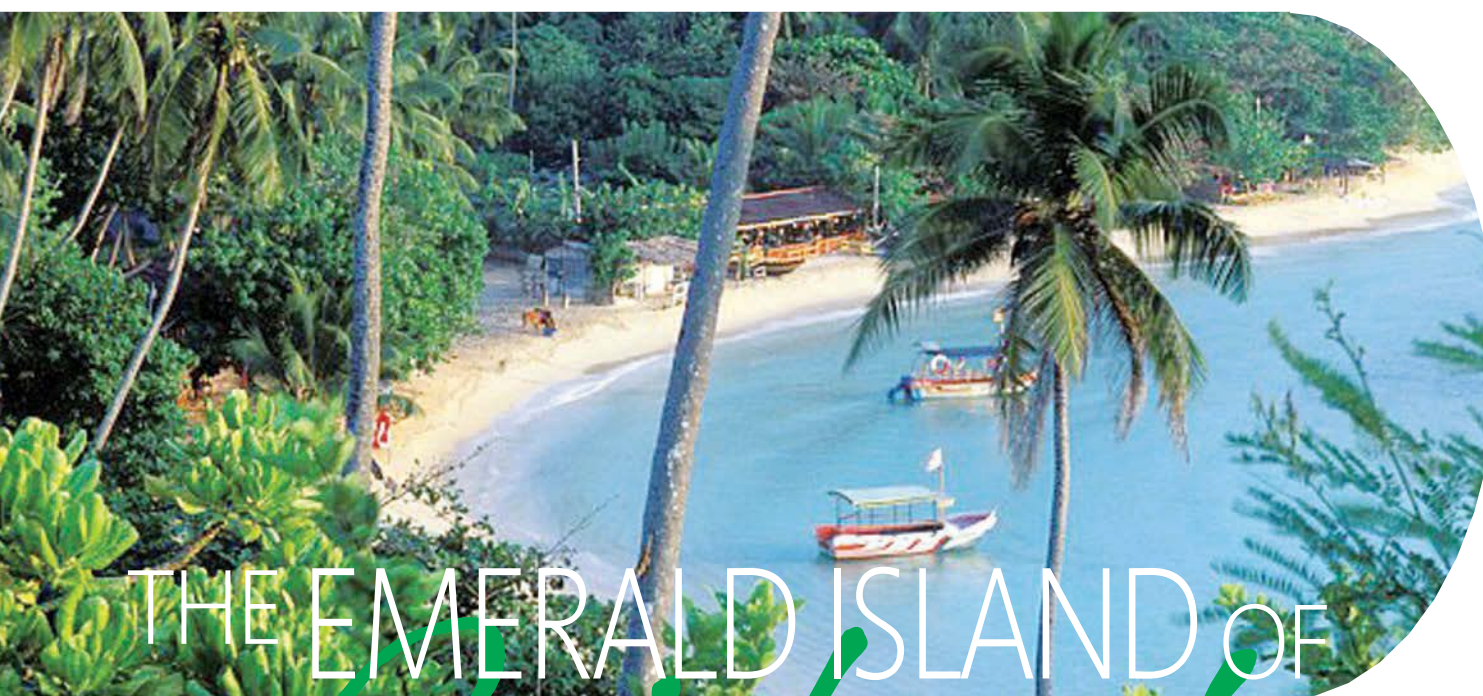
Researchers at Queen Mary, University of London suggest that goats can change their vocal sounds and develop accents. The team studied four groups of pygmy goats. They were first recorded at one week old, when they stayed with their siblings, hidden from predators; the

THIS STUDY PROVIDED EVIDENCE THAT GOATS SEARCH FOR COGNITIVE CHALLENGES BEYOND THE MOTIVATION OF A REWARD. SIMPLY PUT, THEY LIKE LEARNING FOR LEARNING'S SAKE.

second at five weeks old, when they form social groups with animals of the same age. The team reported that even though the genetically related kids produced similar calls, the calls of kids raised in the same social groups were also similar to each other, becoming more similar as they grew older. The experiment showed that goat kids modified their calls according to their social surroundings, developing similar accents. The universe has not made a single mistake in creating its creatures. Learn how intelligent these animals really are – it will become harder for you to justify eating them.

We

The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today.



THE EMERALD ISLAND OF *Sri Lanka*

A most enjoyable trip. By Veena Adige

At first glance, the emerald island of Sri Lanka appears to be an extension of Kerala and Tamil Nadu. The greenery, the people, the food, the environment – all appear to be the same. But a deeper look shows that there is more to Sri Lanka.

To begin with, the population is less. Sparsely populated in most parts, the people are concentrated in cities and towns. There are patches of forests especially in the south and the west, where trees and wild animals abound and humans are less. In the main cities there are more tourists than the local people. Quite a few white skinned people keep clicking the sights and eating string hoppers (*idiappan* in Tamil Nadu) with relish. At the airport we were welcomed by "*ayubowan*" which means "May you live longer".

There are no mounds of smelly

waste and plastic bags are conspicuous by their absence. The bags are there but they are not part of the rubbish. There are no *paan* chewing people who spit at the least provocation. People are friendly, neat and mind their own business. We did not come across any fights or any forms of arguments or violence during our entire stay. Sri Lanka seemed to be at peace with herself.

Since it is almost on the equator and since it is a tropical country, the weather can be unpredictable. It can rain at any time of the year though the north-east and the southwest monsoons bring water to the country from October to January and May to July. In places like Nuwara Eliya, the temperatures can be anywhere in the range of three degrees to 30. On the coast the average temperature can be in the thirties. Several rivers crisscrossing the country (103 to be

precise) means that there is no shortage of water and that water sports like river rafting can go on round the year. Sri Lanka is a great place for relaxing and for sports lovers. One can spend time just relaxing on the beach watching the sunset at Bentota, or go for water sports there. Surfing, speed boat rides, underwater diving, deep sea fishing can be done here.

THE VISITS

From Mumbai we went to Colombo, just two and a half hours by plane. From there we went to Kandy, visiting the elephant orphanage on the way. The Pinnewala Elephant Orphanage has about 70 to 100 semi-tame elephants roaming freely. Tourists vie with each other to bottle feed the baby elephants and feed grass and other eatables to the older ones. The highlight is the twice daily

Kandy, Matale and Nuwara Eliya are the highlands with a lot of beautiful tea plantations, waterfalls, valleys and streams. The highest mountain of Pidurutalagala and the famous Worlds End are situated in Nuwara Eliya.

Kandy was the last capital of the ancient kings' era of Sri Lanka. Since the Kandyan kingdom came under the

SRI LANKA IS A GREAT PLACE FOR RELAXING AND FOR SPORTS LOVERS.

ONE CAN SPEND TIME JUST RELAXING ON THE BEACH WATCHING THE SUNSET AT BENTOTA, OR GO FOR WATER SPORTS THERE.



Kandian sari.

was declared a world heritage site by UNESCO in 1988. The sacred relic of the Tooth of the Buddha is kept in the temple at Kandy. The temple is beautiful, neat and clean and Buddhists (60 per cent of Sri Lankans are Buddhists) religiously visit here and pray.

The Kandian sari is a three-piece dress, draped like the Indian sari with a difference. There are fringes at the waist where the skirt is tied. The long *pallu*, neatly folded, is tied over the skirt and most women wear it in this



trip to the river where these elephants love to play and splash in the waters, allowing their owners to wash them, to the delight of the onlookers for whom this is a favourite sight. This orphanage is easily accessible on the way from Colombo to Kandy. There is plenty to see in Kandy which is in the Central Province of Sri Lanka.

British only around 1815, the city still retains the living traditions of its sovereign kingdom era. Kandyans are proud of their heritage and most Kandyans subscribe to Buddhist values. Kandy is home to The Temple of the Tooth Relic (Sri Dalada Maligawa), one of the most venerable places for the Buddhist community of Sri Lanka and all around the world. It

style, mainly in and around Kandy, as it is their national dress. One can recall the former Prime Minister Sirimavo Bhandarnaike wearing the Kandian sari.

We were treated to a cultural show where the dances resembled Indian dances a lot. The blowing of the conch, the beating of the drums and the exotic dresses of the dancers look



Botanical.

PERADENIYA BOTANICAL GARDENS IS THE BEST BOTANICAL GARDEN IN SRI LANKA AND ONE OF THE BEST IN THE REGION.

IT DATES BACK TO THE ANCIENT KINGS OF THE COUNTRY ALTHOUGH THE BRITISH CHANGED THE LOOK OF IT.



Indian and we could easily relate to them.

The hour-long programme ended with a fire dance where the dancers ran over live coals and fire without getting burnt. They even 'ate' fire and struck the lit candles on their tongues without getting burnt.

THE BEST GARDEN

Peradeniya Botanical Gardens is the best botanical garden in Sri Lanka and one of the best in the region. It dates back to the ancient kings of the country although the British changed the look of it. The British are said to have used the gardens to grow trees that could not be grown at Kew Gardens. The large banyan tree, the orchid house, the suspension bridge, and the bats are some of its main attractions.

Buddhist temples are plenty and there are Buddha's statues in every city and town. Huge golden ones, sitting peacefully in glass boxes are attractive. In Colombo there is a lovely temple which is huge, right in the middle of the town, and people visit this place reverentially. There is hardly any noise or pollution or even dust in all these places.

There are extensive tea plantations, a gift from the British who brought the tea bushes from Darjeeling, we are told. The roads

bordering the tea plantations are bounded by lovely flowering trees or the golden durando making a pretty border for the tea bushes. Women with baskets on their backs, picking tea leaves are a dime a dozen. And tea factories and outlets abound. Tourists are taken to these places, shown how tea is made, given a sample and gently coaxed into buying tea.

From Kandy and Nuwara Eliya we went to the beaches of Bentota where Vivanta by the Taj has beautiful views and a relaxing atmosphere. The six-lane expressway was smooth and as we returned to Colombo we passed several villages on the way. Our stay in Sri Lanka was relaxing and interesting and we enjoyed it a great deal.

We

Find a place inside where there's joy, and the joy will burn out the pain.

I am a 29-year-old woman married to a man five years senior to me. My husband is highly qualified and has got a very good job. He earns a packet and everyone says that he is on his way to making it very big.

Of course, I am happy about this and am very proud of him. But in the last two years or so I have seen him getting more and more tense and stressed out. He works for long hours and is absolutely exhausted by the time he comes home. Leave alone talking to me, he does not even talk to our kids, even when he comes back before they go to bed – which is rare.

There is another issue in our marriage which is worrying me. In initial years of marriage we had a very active sex life, but this has changed in the last three years. Not only does my husband not initiate sex any more, but even on the occasions when I have done this, he ignores it saying he is very tired or has not been able to perform.

Though I understand that he has been working hard I still wasn't prepared for it when last week he announced that he wanted to quit his job and take up one he has been offered in an NGO which works for rehabilitating young teenage boys who have got into trouble with the law.

This is very noble work, I know, but it will pay a pittance and we will have to lower our standard of living. The future of our children too will also not be as secure as it is now.

I am not prepared for all this. How can I convince my husband that this would be a stupid step to take? That he should think of other ways of reducing the stress in his life?

You seem to be in a state of shock at the thought of the sudden change that will come in your life if your husband takes up the job with the NGO. The shock seems to be so great that the exhaustion your husband is experiencing these days, how he is ignoring his children and how he has become incapable of having sex all seem less important to you.

Ask yourself if he is getting any joy from his work and his success and your answer will definitely be that he is not. Shouldn't you take this into consideration when he says that he wants to change job?

You seem to think that changing job and going to work for an NGO is the end of the world. Yes, it may change the world as you know it, but that is not to say that the new world could not be better than the one you live in now. It could be a world without tension, one in which your husband has time to play with his children and one in which the relationship you both share will become stronger.

You may have less money in that new world. Today, many of us tend to give money more importance than it deserves. When less money means more happiness, why shouldn't we choose that?

Remember that this is not an irrevocable decision that you and your husband will be taking. If your husband regains his zest for his old life, he could always go back to it. Then you will be the one to protest!

I am a 25-year-old man. I completed my engineering three years ago, but I have still not been able to get a job though I have gone for dozen interviews. I don't know why this is so because I have always done well in my studies and I am also articulate and smart and so do well at interviews. Invariably I am told that the firm has no vacancies. Now, both my parents are extremely worried about me.

I have a twin sister who has never been interested in studies. After graduation, she didn't want to study further and took up a job as a secretary in a private company. She has done well in this position and has got several increments.

These days my father has begun to comment on how well my sister is doing and how we must get her married. He always ends up by saying that we cannot afford to do this till I get a job. This makes me feel very bad.

Recently I unexpectedly went into my sister's room and found her crying. We are very close and so I insisted on knowing what was wrong. What she told me shocked me. She said that her elderly boss misbehaves with her, touches her awkwardly and sometimes kisses her – all the while pretending that he is only showing the love of a grandfather.

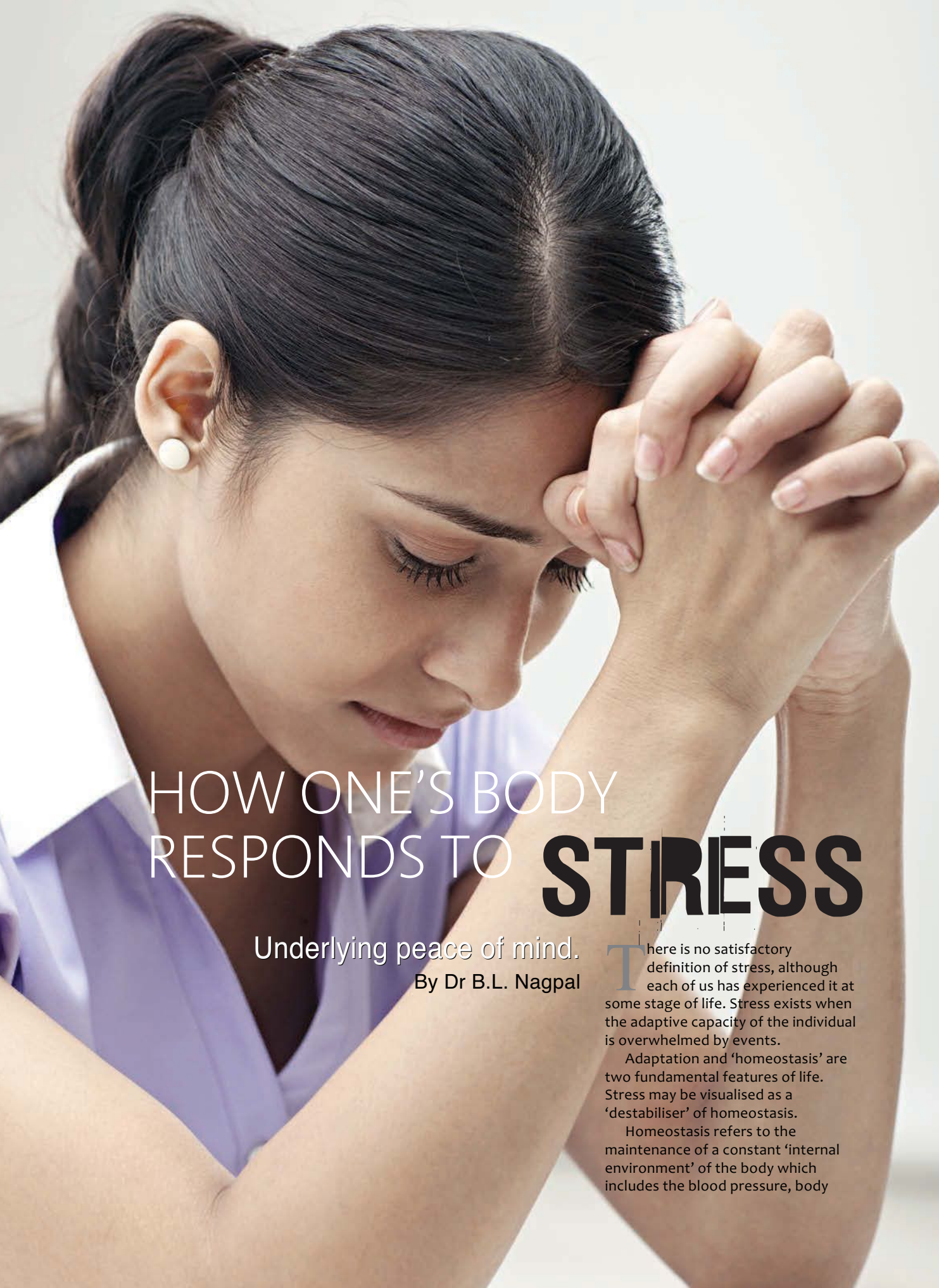


She said that she felt like quitting her job except for the fact that the family needs her income. I told her to quit her job, but we both knew that she cannot do that. Now, I want to commit suicide. What a useless son/brother I am! If I tell my father what has happened, he will lay all the blame on me. What should I do?

First of all, you should not panic like this. Bad times do not go on indefinitely and you will certainly get a good job soon. In this connection, you should think out of the box about job avenues you can explore. These might be slightly removed from your field of expertise, but there is no harm in exploring them. As far as your sister's problem is concerned, she has to act immediately. Tell her to stand up to her boss and tell him that she doesn't like his behaviour. She should speak politely but firmly. Her boss could then say that she has misunderstood him, could get angry, could threaten her with dismissal or could react in some other way. Whatever he does, your sister should stand firm and if he goes to the extent of firing her, she should respond by threatening to expose him and to even go to the police.

In your present circumstances, if he is mortified, says that she has misunderstood him and apologises, she could accept the apology and let the matter go. But she should see that she does not remain alone with him much and should also maintain a very formal relationship with him. She should begin to try for another job and if she gets one or you do, she should leave her present employer.





HOW ONE'S BODY RESPONDS TO **STRESS**

Underlying peace of mind.

By Dr B.L. Nagpal

There is no satisfactory definition of stress, although each of us has experienced it at some stage of life. Stress exists when the adaptive capacity of the individual is overwhelmed by events.

Adaptation and 'homeostasis' are two fundamental features of life. Stress may be visualised as a 'destabiliser' of homeostasis.

Homeostasis refers to the maintenance of a constant 'internal environment' of the body which includes the blood pressure, body

temperature, blood sugar levels and many other parameters.

The importance of the 'internal environment' was first highlighted by the great biologist of the 19th century, Claud Bernard. He emphasised that multicellular organisms including humans live in a perfectly organised and controlled internal environment which he called, *Millieu interieur*.

The word 'homeostasis' was introduced by Harvard professor Walter B Cannon who demonstrated the part played by adrenal glands in the body's adaptation to stress.

In 1930, Hans Selye of Canada started his monumental experimental work on animals to determine the body's responses exposure to stress. After working relentlessly for three decades, he came to the conclusion that destabilisation of homeostasis is prevented by the stimulation of the 'neuroendocrine axis' under stressful conditions. The neuroendocrine axis is formed by the brain (Hypothalamus)..... Pituitary.....Adrenal.

The hypothalamus controls the homeostasis. The pituitary is a master endocrine gland closely linked to the hypothalamus anatomically and functionally. All other endocrine glands report to it regarding their activities; and, by secreting trophic hormones, the pituitary regulates their structures and functions.

THE ENABLING GLANDS

The adrenal glands enable the body to withstand the large variety of environmental stresses and strains to which it is subjected. They play perhaps, the largest single role in determining whether any person is sick or well.

Thus, the experimental work led Selye to suggest a new concept under the umbrella term of, "diseases of adaptation" or even better maladaptation, due to abnormal body responses to stress.

When an organism is confronted with a life-threatening situation, it has to either fight or flight (flee). There is an alarm reaction. Both fight and flight phenomena require readjustment of various parameters



WHEN STRESS BECOMES CHRONIC, THE ELEVATED ADRENAL MEDULLARY SECRETION OF HORMONES RETURNS TO NORMAL LEVELS BUT THE INCREASED SYMPATHETIC NEURONAL DISCHARGE USUALLY CONTINUES AS LONG AS STRESS PERSISTS.

of homeostasis on an emergency basis so that there is no destabilisation. Consequently, many cardiovascular, respiratory and metabolic adjustments take place.

More blood is diverted to heart, lungs and body muscles at the cost of other tissues where it can be temporarily curtailed. The heart beats at an increased rate more forcefully, and pumps more blood. The systolic blood pressure rises. More glucose is made available in the blood so that it can be used as a fuel for energy production. The rate and depth of respiration increases and the pupils get dilated so that more light enters for the clarity of vision.

HOW THE CHANGES COME

All these and many other changes are brought about by the stimulation of a sympathetic autonomic nervous system and release of adrenaline and nor-adrenaline hormones by the

medullary portions of adrenal glands.

The beneficial role of such a response in physical stress is obvious but its benefits in psychological stress is not clear.

When stress becomes chronic, the elevated adrenal medullary secretion of hormones returns to normal levels but the increased sympathetic neuronal discharge usually continues as long as stress persists.

A moderate amount of stress is helpful as in exercise and makes you function more efficiently. A lot of stress is not only unpleasant but counter-productive.

In chronic stress, the hypothalamus gets activated which in turn stimulates the pituitary gland to secrete more adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH). ACTH acts on the adrenal cortex leading to increased secretion of corticoid hormones. The increase in corticoid hormones is essential for survival as it offers high resistance to the body against stress.

The animals in which adrenal glands have been removed, die when exposed even to mild stress. Similarly, exposure to stress in adrenal insufficiency (Addison's disease) is fatal in human beings. One way to define stress is that stress is a condition where endogenous secretion of ACTH and corticoid is increased.

Although, for a short term, neuroendocrine response to stress is good, its prolonged action becomes harmful possibly because it gets imbalanced. Other hormones such as

the thyroid, pituitary, adrenal and sex steroids may participate and aggravate the condition.

CAUSES

The causes of stress are different at different ages – e.g. in young adulthood, the sources of stress are found in competitive examinations, marriage, employment and parent-child relationships; in middle age, the focus shifts to spousal relationships, problems with ageing parents and problems associated with teenage offsprings; in old age, the principal concerns are related to retirement, financial insecurity, loss of near and dear ones, loss of physical capacity and death phobias.



Trauma, burns, surgical operation, prolonged infection, rape, exposure to cold and litigation may cause physical as well as mental stress.

Sometimes, the cause is insignificant when considered objectively – e.g. promotion and transfer – requiring adaptive behaviour.

Considerable mental stress may result from the increasing complexity of life in modern society. In urban areas, being stressed has become so common that we fail to realise we are stressed.

Such stresses will produce different responses in different individuals depending upon their personalities. The response to stress

may take the form of disturbance of thought, feeling and behaviour or disturbance of bodily functions and bodily structures giving rise to psychosomatic disorders. The abnormal responses to stress can be regarded as a failure of adaptation on the part of an individual.

The physical changes which occur may be the result of failure to secrete or the hypersecretion of 'adaptive hormones'.

The psyche influences the development of organic disease in all parts of the body – illness begets anxiety and this in turn begets illness.

Stress is a major contributory factor in diseases like hypertension, heart attack, stroke, diabetes, peptic

ulcer, ulcerative colitis, asthma, allergy, migraine, sexual dysfunction, anxiety neurosis, depression, schizophrenia, suicidal tendency etc.

MANIFESTATIONS

Different persons react differently to stress. Acute stress may be manifested by a feeling of restlessness, irritability, fatigue and tension. There may be inability to concentrate, sleep disturbances and angry outbursts.

In chronic cases, the person may react by way of anxiety, frustration, depression, mood swings, apprehension, physical symptoms, self-medication and addiction to alcohol.

MANAGEMENT

Most people who suffer from stress can manage the problem themselves and succeed. Recognise the problem as early as possible and develop effective strategies by taking stock of the situation with a calm and peaceful mind. The following guidelines will help you in planning:

- ✿ Stress makes you to feel tired – give proper breaks for meals, refreshment, entertainment and relaxation.
- ✿ Stress makes planning and decisions difficult – find time for these every day, preferably in the morning.
- ✿ Stress affects memory and concentration – relieve the burden by writing in diaries, charts and notebooks.
- ✿ If stress is due to some physical illness with slow recovery – get the best possible treatment.
- ✿ Look after your diet, exercise, sleep problems and hobbies.
- ✿ Change your attitudes – some stresses are self-induced.
- ✿ Decrease your work pressure – if you feel overworked and stressed.
- ✿ Practise yoga, meditation and breathing exercises.
- ✿ Avoid caffeine drinks, smoking and alcohol.
- ✿ Consult your doctor who may prescribe a short course of sedatives.

Concluding REMARKS

Stress is not necessarily always harmful. Without stress, plants, animals, people and even civilisations tend to degenerate and wither away.

Orchids need comparative drought to produce their best blooms, bones freed from the stress of weight bearing undergo osteoporosis. A climate with wide variations in temperature is likely to produce a people physically and intellectually superior and the great civilisations have developed in lands where conditions were hard and life was difficult.

We

Spread love everywhere you go. Let no one ever come to you without leaving happier. – Mother Teresa



Food items

When it comes to healthy-looking skin, what you put in your body may have a bigger effect than what you put on it.

...For glowing skin

Tomatoes – They have a high oxidant level and hence are considered the skincare superheros. Tomatoes can be eaten raw or mixed into salads. Even consuming tomato-based foods like sauce or tomato juice can help clear up acne. Tomato peels also create an excellent facemask to protect the skin from being exposed to any UV damage.

Coconuts – There are different forms of coconuts that are integral to keeping the body healthy and skin glowing. The tender coconut water contains potassium that acts as the best natural remedy for dry skin. The coconut oil on the other hand contains vitamins E and K, which help in moisturising the scalp hair and making your hair stronger.

Berries – Eating the dark berries like cherries or blueberries helps in reducing skin blemishes. They are high in oxidants and therefore help in controlling skin acne.

Green tea – Drinking green tea reduces the acne-producing hormone known as dihydrotestosterone (DHT). Green tea bags also help in reducing dark circles. Keep the bags in the refrigerator for 30 minutes and then place them on the eyes for about 20 minutes. Do this twice every day.

Brown rice – These contain a lipid molecule called ceramides that help to keep the skin moisturised and healthy. This molecule gets imbedded in the external layer of the skin, which helps to lock the moisture, and hence forms the perfect substitute to eating white rice.

To avoid for a better skin

Milk – Yes! Shocking right? Milk or milk products have an awful impact on the skin. Milk contains a high level of insulin that increases the production of sebum (skin oils), hence leading to acne and pimples. The calcium that we get from milk can be obtained from raw vegetables instead.

Fried food – Avoid any fried foods that use super-heated vegetable oil, tempura, fries, chips, deep fried fish etc. Heated vegetable oil causes an oxidising effect on your body that leads to age spots.

Gluten – This affects your digestive system and therefore causes a lot of stress on the skin. Try and cut out from your diet gluten for just about 10 days and you will see a difference.

Sodas – They contain a lot of sugar, preservatives and corn syrup, all of which causes a lot of blood sugar imbalance in the body. They are also highly acidic and therefore can weaken your bones and joints faster, hence making your skin layers thinner and more sensitive.

Sugar – Start reading the labels of every food item you buy. Almost everything you consume already has sugar, so start avoiding it wherever possible. It is all about having a controlled amount of sugar every day – a maximum of 60 grams a day. High intake of sugar will cause wrinkles to appear faster and make your skin weaker.
– Anjali Sanghvi.

A Musical Comeback

Popular Uttaran Jodi of Vikas-Tina returns with a musical track.

By Aditi Rastogi



Vikas Bhalla is an actor, singer and producer. This multi-talented performer is making his comeback with none other than popular TV actress *Tina Datta* for their upcoming track “Tumko Dekha”.

Woman’s Era spoke to the dapper Vikas Bhalla and gorgeous Tina Datta to know about their track and work.

Tell us something about your journey so far, Vikas?

It’s been a roller-coaster ride with its share of highs, lows, and constant phases. Nevertheless have enjoyed every bit of it and cherished all the moments as they’ve made me evolved me into a better person. It’s a never-ending journey till your last day. So, one should make sure that they have fun throughout. Good times and bad times both don’t last long. One should maintain one’s sanity and equilibrium, that’s crucial. Acting on some of the best shows on TV such as Uttaran, Jassi, Shanno Ki Shaadi or Tum Bin Jaaon Kahaan has been a highly enriching experience. And as they say, the best lies ahead.

Tina, tell us something about your journey so far.

The Journey has been good with ups and downs, but the way you deal with it makes you a stronger and better person. From Kolkata to Mumbai, the journey has been fantastic. Every day I learn something. I have seen all sides of fame. Uttaran made me a star overnight.

Vikas, you are an actor, producer and now singer. Why did you decide to push a career in singing instead of acting?

The love for singing, is from a very early age. I trained in Hindustani classical music with a diploma from the Allahabad University, and have always felt that music is my true calling. The independent music scenario in our country is undergoing a transformation. Currently I’m planning to release more of my music in the forthcoming period. Production and acting have given a dimension to my life that I explored and learnt along the way. It’s fascinating.

Where do you see the Indian music going? We see revival of musical instruments, we find more musicians and singers, we find folk and classical songs growing with pop and rap. How do you see the current changes?

I find the current generation a lot more knowledgeable, appreciative and open to hearing out various alternative forms of music other than the popular stuff. This in itself is a very healthy and encouraging sign for musicians like me who like to experiment with various styles. I see a lot more collaboration of talent and jugal bandis happening in the near future which would evolve the indie space even more and hopefully make it a force to reckon with, as the current music industry is fully Bollywood-driven at this point.

Is there a key philosophy to your music?

It should move me emotionally, that’s it. The one hour of morning Riyaaz when I’m on my Tanpura is like meditation to a different transports

me world all together. It's a high that no alcohol or drugs can give you. Music is my religion.

Has any other composer asked you to sing for him after you lent your voice in Son of Sardar?

I did a duet track with Sonu Nigam composed by Jaidev last year for the movie Santa Banta called Machli which worked quite well. Then I released my song Dhuan with Sony Music last month which has done a million plus in digital streams and download. More is coming up soon in the independent space such as Tumko Dekha with Saregama Music.

Your claim to fame till date remains your music album Dhuan though you also did a film opposite Kajol apart from other movies? What is keeping you busy these days?

Luckily for me I invested what I made from my TV acting career into

my properties which now gives me the freedom to explore my passion - my music. I'm currently also line-producing films in Canada through a company I incorporated there in lieu of the production treaty signed between India and Canada some time back. Plus managing my properties is a full-time job in itself. I've opened a school in Bandra at one of my properties which is jointly managed by my wife and mother. With regards to acting in TV and films I choose to wait for something worthwhile and not just do something for the heck of it.

You both are coming back after a long time for this upcoming album. What do you want to say on this? What you like the most in this album, Tina?

Vikas: Tumko Dekha is a single that's been produced keeping in mind and retaining the essence of the song, without going out in terms of production value. Simplicity is the key here. It's been produced by Rajeev Bhalla who's an ace guitarist himself with an enviable collection of guitars from across the globe. He's given the song a very classy feel which you will find

when you hear it. Even in terms of my rendition, I've kept it simple and straight from the heart. Easy singing as I call it.

Tina: The best part about this album is the song as its not only my favourite song but also my mom's as well. And shooting with Vikas is always super fun as he's an amazing co-star. We share a great chemistry on screen and hence when he approached me for this album I immediately agreed for it without a second thought. Singing is a talent and is connected to the soul. Good music always perks up my mood.

Tina, when do we see you back on small screen? Tell us something about your new project?

Tina: TV is where my heart lies. I surely want to make a comeback soon. I am waiting for the right project. Uttaran has established me as an actor. I have to do some path-breaking stuff. The scenario of TV is changing. Wide variety of content is being made.

"Super soon... Eagerly waiting for something great to come up!"

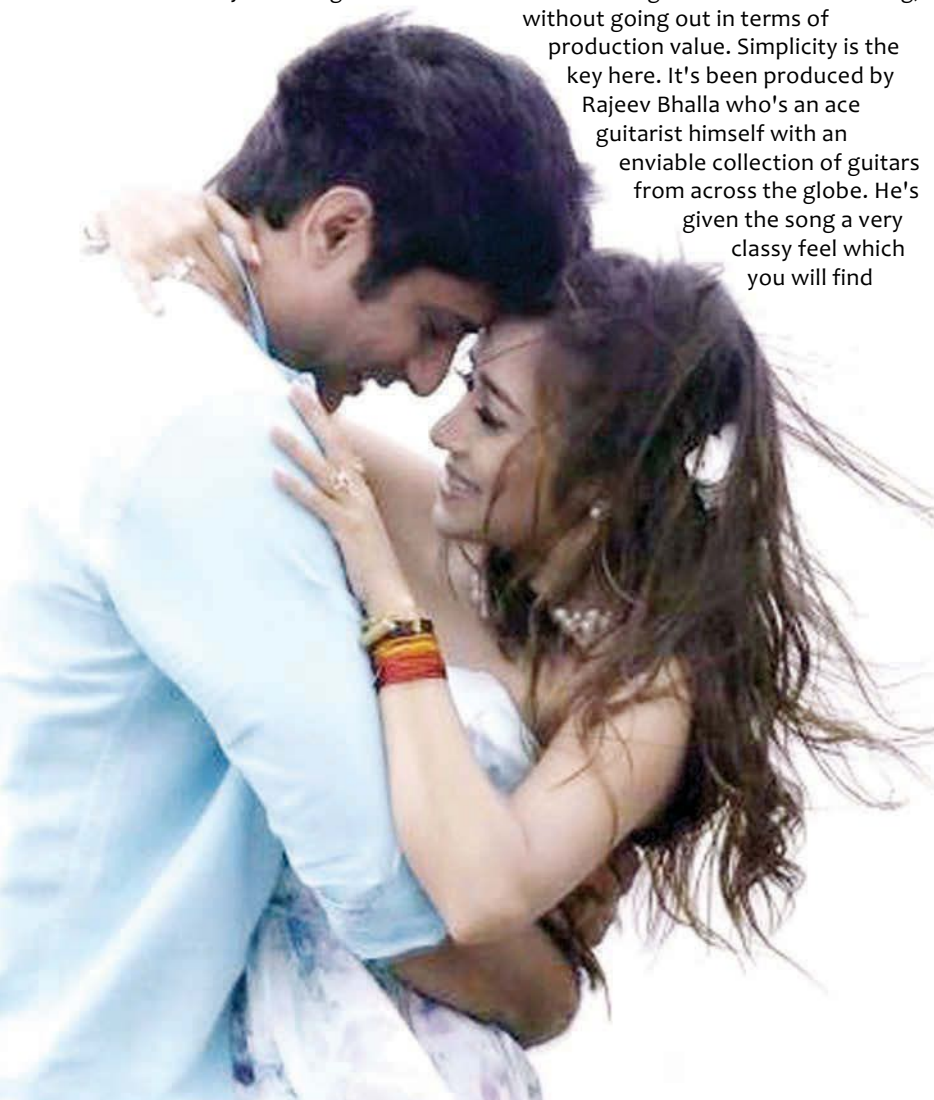
What is your message would you people want to give to our Woman's Era readers?

Vikas: Women's Era is definitely one of the most reputed woman's magazine we have, and I'd like to wish all the readers a very blessed and happy life. Today is the day and age when Indian women are far superior to men in terms of their achievements and footprints on the global map and it's something that makes me very happy. They say a country is truly on the path to progress if it's women are empowered, and I see that is happening in today's India. God bless you all.

Tina: Live and let live. Life is over before you know it. Make the most of it. Life is an ice cream, eat it before it melts. One must have the right people in life. Everything is all about choices.

We

We love life, not because we are used to living but because we are used to loving.
— Friedrich Nietzsche



Short
Story

THE BANANA SANDWICH

It formed the base of a new menu! By Puneet Mahtta

"Oh come on, Suhana, we are not living in the Stone Age. You think an IIM Ahmedabad alumnus and the vice-president of the New Age Foundation, can't even manage his food?" I replied with arrogance.

I got up early, as we had an important meeting with one of the foreign clients today and there was some groundwork which was still to be done. Suhana was busy unpacking some of the luggage which had arrived yesterday.

We had moved just three days back to this satellite town in North India, after I got a very good offer from a multinational firm.

I took a quick shower and began dressing for office.

"Kabir, breakfast will be ready in 15 minutes," Suhana said.

"Kabir, breakfast will be ready in 15 minutes," Suhana said.

"No time, getting late, I will grab something in the office," I replied zipping my laptop bag.

"No time, getting late, I will grab something in the office," I replied zipping my laptop bag.

"I forgot to tell you, Reena called up last night. She is coming with her husband to Pune today. They are en route from Dubai to Singapore and have decided to spend a day at Pune with moma and papa."

With some hesitation she continued, "I was wondering if we could go and meet them."

"You know I cannot come because of this new job. Why don't you go and meet them? You haven't met your sister for two years."

"But I cannot leave you alone while we are still settling into this new place."

"Don't worry about me. I have an important meeting and will come late. I suggest

you take the earliest flight to Pune and plan to return tomorrow."

"What about your lunch and dinner?"

"I will dine in or order something."

"Remember, unlike Mumbai, there is no nightlife in this place. People prefer going to bed early. If you are late in the evening, all eateries will be closed."

"Oh come on, Suhana, we are not living in the Stone Age. You think an IIM Ahmedabad alumnus and the vice president of the New Age Foundation, can't even manage his food?" I replied with arrogance.

"All right, if you need anything you can approach the Salujas, our next-door neighbours. They are nice and friendly people, I will SMS you their phone number," she said.



"Suhana, I have to rush, the office car is already here, and it's not good to keep the driver waiting for long," I almost jumped into the waiting car.

"Good morning, Mr Kabir Solanki," a familiar voice called from behind, as I walked towards my office cabin.

It was Raj Malhotra, our HR manager.

"I hope you are comfortable in our office and town. Please don't hesitate to ask if you need anything."

"Good morning, Mr Malhotra. Thanks, I will definitely tell you if I need anything," I replied.

Our video conference started at 10 am and went on till 2 pm. We had decided to have a one-hour lunch break, before we met again.

I requested Raj to order something for me to eat, while I began going through some of the files.

Our CEO called up from Bengaluru to have an update on the meeting.

When I hung up, it was 2.45 pm and I was feeling very hungry. "What about my food?" I enquired of Raj.

He checked up with the canteen staff and reverted with an apology, "I am sorry there has been some confusion, the canteen boy thought that the food had been ordered for some Kabir Khan from the finance department... I will personally go and get something for you."

"It's all right, my meeting resumes in the next 10 minutes, there is no time." I assured Raj and helped myself to a cup of coffee and quickly munched on some wafers and biscuits.

Our meeting finally concluded at 8.30 pm.

I called in the driver, and started on my way back home after a tiring day.

"It will be better if I order food to be delivered at home, it should only take 15-20 minutes to reach," I thought. So, I logged in to my laptop and ordered myself a large pizza.

I noticed that roadside shops were closing and there were less vehicles on the road at this time compared to the last three days when I had been leaving home early. But hey, what's that? A line of vehicles! How come a traffic jam at this time?

I asked the driver to take an alternative route.

"We are not very far off, sir... this jam should get over in a couple of minutes," he assured me.

I accepted his words, rather unconvinced.

When the cars ahead did not move for the next 10 minutes, the driver got off to enquire.

He returned after a while and said, "A bull is sitting in the middle of the road, and it is in no mood to move.

A traffic police constable is diverting all the vehicles from the side lane."

As we could not turn back now, I began listening to one of my favourite songs from a popular album.

Just then my phone began ringing, it was the pizza delivery boy. He had reached home ahead of me.

I wondered what to do now, our car had not moved an inch further.

I remembered that Suhana had texted me the phone number of our neighbours. So, I rang them.

"Hi, I am Kabir Solanki here, your neighbour."

There was a female voice at the other end.

"Hi, I am Swati Saluja. Your wife told me about you. What can I do?"

"I am sorry to bother you, I had ordered a pizza, and the delivery boy is already there at the door. It will take me some time to reach home. Can you please take the delivery from him?"

"Oh certainly, I will collect it from him," she replied.

After 20 minutes, our car finally moved ahead.

We reached home in 10 minutes. Had I known the

delivered your pizza," and then she continued with a pause, "It so happened that little Banti was not enjoying his dinner tonight. When I took Ronnie (he is our dog) outside for peeing, Banti

I applied some tomato ketchup to the bread. Then I sliced a banana to create filling for my sandwich. I sprinkled some black salt on the banana and grilled the sandwich in a toaster. I ended up cooking something which I named 'Banana Sandwich'.



route, I would have preferred walking down.

I rang the doorbell of the Salujas.

A young innocent-looking boy aged around 10, opened the door.

"Momma, someone has come to see you."

A lady in her mid-30s came from inside.

"You must be Mr Solanki, please have a seat," she gestured me to the sofa.

"Thank you very much but I would prefer to be at home," I said and stood there waiting for my pizza to be handed over.

"Well, the delivery boy

thought that I had ordered the pizza for him and was simply delighted."

And then as if reading my worst fears, came straight to the point, "He ate it all."

"Oh!" I exclaimed. "What a brat!" I murmured.

"I am sorry, but I can order one for you right away," she said apologetically.

"No, it's fine. I will manage. Now, I will take your leave."

"Why don't you have a cup of coffee?"

I politely refused and, as I

was about to leave, there emerged a burly Sikh in a blue turban from one of the rooms. He was holding a glass of whisky in one hand.

"Hello, I am Monty Singh Saluja, how do you do?" he said in a typical Punjabi accent.

"Hi, I am Kabir, doing fine," I replied as we shook hands.

"Swati was telling me that you are alone at house today."

"Yes, my wife has gone to her parents' in Pune, and will return tomorrow."

"Lucky man, my wife does not go anywhere alone leaving me, except shopping," he said laughing.

He then drew closer to me and said, "Let us sit together some day and have some *tandoori* chicken and beer," and then whispered in my ear, "of course without our wives."

I nodded to what he said, and somehow did not feel like telling him that I was a teetotaler and a staunch vegetarian.

I waved goodnight to the neighbours and went on to unlock my door, calculating

the daily dietary requirements of a 10-year-old.

After a quick shower, I called the Pizza Store, but there was no reply, indicating that it had closed for the day.

I opened the fridge to check if there was something to eat. There was only bread and butter (which had been my breakfast for the last two days).

Suhana had not been able to create a full kitchen ever since we had moved in.

Just then the phone rang, it was Suhana.

"Hi Kabir, what's up?"

"Doing great..."

"I forgot to tell you, I had given some clothes for ironing and asked the *dhobi* to deliver them to the Salujas, remember our next-door neighbours? You can collect your clothes from them."

I was in no mood to go to that house again.

"Don't worry, I have wrapped myself in a piece of cloth," I said sarcastically.

"You mean you are in a towel?" she giggled.

"Yes, and it's all because

of you," I replied angrily.

"Kabir, I am so sorry," she became emotional.

"It's okay," I softened.

"What did you have for your dinner?" she asked.

If I had told her the truth she would have started giving me lessons on disciplined eating, hence I decided not to share my day's experiences with her.

"I ordered myself some sandwiches," I replied after thinking for a while.

"That's all?" she exclaimed.

"Yes. I had a heavy lunch today and preferred to have something light at night."

"Okay, please take care."

I hung up.

I laid my hands on a couple of bananas, the sole fruit in the house. Its fructose provided me with instant energy.

As I hogged like an apeman, my thoughts went back to the morning conversation with Suhana.

It had been an off day all right, but I was partly responsible for skipping my breakfast and not taking my lunch.

As I applied butter to

bread I decided to innovate. Why not make this taste different?

I applied some tomato ketchup to the bread. Then I sliced a banana to create filling for my sandwich.

I sprinkled some black salt on the banana and grilled the sandwich in a toaster. I ended up cooking something which I named 'Banana Sandwich'.

Certainly this was not a delicacy that I could fall in love with, but it did give me the satisfaction of having tried a new menu with whatever material I had.

I ate three sandwiches and for some reason did not feel hungry anymore. Not because it tasted bad, but because my hunger had subsided. So, I kept one sandwich in the fridge and went on to sleep.

Next morning it was 11 am and I was in office, when Suhana called me up.

"Honey, I am back."

"Good morning. How was everyone?" I asked.

"Everyone was fine, they were all asking about you. When do you plan to be home today?" she went on to ask.

"I presume it should not be later than 8 pm. But why are you asking?"

"Well, I was thinking of preparing a special meal for you tonight."

"Oh that's great!" I said.

"There was this sandwich in the fridge... it tasted different. Where did you order it from? I think we can try it once in a while, not more," she said.

"Sure," I said as I hung up smiling.

We

Work like you don't need the money. Love like you've never been hurt. Dance like nobody's watching.

Beads of Tears

Deep feelings unvoiced through speech
Vague perceptions unknown to touch
Myriad desires unseen to eyes
Intense pain unfelt through senses
Endless instincts that dwell
Undisclosed within the heart and soul
At times overwhelm and ooze out
As tiny emotion-filled drops from eyes.
These trickle to soothe the heart and soul.
These are priceless beads of tears.

— Renuka Krishnaraja.



I am a 16-year-old girl. Since childhood I have burning and itching sensations in my both eyes which become intolerable in humid atmosphere, especially in summers. Along with this mild photophobia, acrimation, ropy discharge and heaviness of lids also occur. I am suffering from eosinophilia also.

These are the symptoms of spring catarrh or allergic inflammation of conjunctiva. Such patients may have personal or family history of other allergic disorders like asthma, eczema or eosinophilia. Disease is more common between 4 to 20 years of age and in summer.

Symptoms of the disease are burning and itching sensations marked in warm, humid atmosphere, intolerance of bright light, stringy discharge, redness of eyes, acrimation and heaviness in eyes.

Disease is often self-limiting and usually burns out spontaneously after 5-10 years. Anti-allergic eyedrops are useful in the disease. There is a great role of steroid eyedrops but should be given only after consultation with an eye specialist. For this disease opinion of an ophthalmologist is must.

I am a 50-year-old working woman. Since last four years I am suffering from hypertension (high blood pressure). I take antihypertensive medication when I feel symptoms like headache, palpitation, giddiness and other symptoms also. Otherwise I don't take medicine, fearing that antihypertensive medication may have some side effects.

First thing is that hypertensive persons should take regular medicine. Hypertension does not require symptomatic treatment because most of the time hypertension is an asymptomatic problem. Antihypertensive medicines either have minimum or no side effects. If a hypertensive person does not take antihypertensive medicine regularly, he may suffer a lot of side effects of hypertension like angina, heart attack, cerebral hemorrhage, paralysis and many others.

A person who is suffering from hypertension should control blood pressure by taking antihypertensive drug regularly, alongwith this take salt-restricted and fat-free diet and mild to moderate exercise is also important in improving the prognosis of the disease.

I am a 30-year-old working woman. Due to long office hours, I take my lunch usually at restaurants or at office canteen, sometimes dinner also. Since last year I usually have stomach upset with pain in abdomen, motion two to three times a day, not feeling fresh after motion and period of diarrhoea alternating with constipation. I always feel fullness in abdomen without having meal and tenderness of abdomen diarrhoea.

These are the symptoms of intestinal amoebiasis, this is more common in people who take food in restaurants, canteen or parties, where food is prepared in bulk and quality of hygiene remains poor. Such person should avoid eating fresh uncooked vegetable and drinking unboiled water.

Amoebiasis can be treated effectively with the help of antiamoebic drugs but it can occur frequently if we don't take precautions. Such persons who are more prone to develop amoebiasis should take warm home-made food, take boiled water and should avoid uncooked vegetables.

I am a 35-year-old working woman because of some family problems and hazards of job, I am suffering from depression since last three years and take antidepressant drugs. What should I do to cope up with this problem.

Depression is a mood which all of us experience from time to time usually as a result of some distressing circumstances. In contrast patients suffering from depression complain of a prolonged dejected state. They seem to have become ill for no reason.

Symptoms of depression are insomnia, diurnal variation of mood, slowness of thought, inability to make decisions, ideas of guilt, unworthiness and self-blame, loss of appetite, loss of weight, amenorrhea, pressure headache, weeping silently and many more.

Management of depression are antidepressant drugs, psychotherapy, positive thinking and company of positive thinking persons. Regular consultation of psychiatrist is a must.



Q & A

My daughter is about 13 years old. She has frequent nasal allergy since last two years. What should I do for its prevention and management.

An abnormal response of the tissues to certain substance is known as allergy. Symptoms of nasal allergy are nasal itching followed by sneezing which usually occurs in paroxysms. Nasal discharge occurs which is profuse, clear and watery, sometimes followed by nasal obstruction.

Causes of nasal allergy are dust, fumes, pollens, etc. Management of nasal allergy are removal of allergen, hot fomentation, antihistaminic drugs and usually avoidance cold and citrus food products.

— Dr Sanjay Teotia.

Readers are invited to send in any health and medical queries they would like to be answered. *Woman's Era* will provide answers to your questions and offer solutions to your problems.

Individual replies cannot be sent. Address your letters (neatly written on white paper) to:

WOMAN'S ERA,

E-3, Jhandewala Estate, New Delhi-110055. Womansera.com

Javed Jaffrey is a great dancer, comedian, actor impressionist who is well known for his work in Bollywood films and television shows.



WORSHIPPERS OF RISING SUN

By Rashmi Bhargava

He made his acting debut with 'Meri Jung' in 1985 where he made a huge impact in a negative role. He has been part of many hit films like '100 Days', 'Fire', 'Earth', 'Salaam Namaste', 'Singh is Kingg' and '3 Idiots' and others. WE interviewed Javed Jaffrey to know more about him. When I decided to take his interview I was a little nervous and of course thrilled. Actually he is a special person with whom you like to talk. My first question was to him. "Being the son or daughter of a legendary film personality you get more respect. But I have never used that (my father's name) as an influence to enter industry. It is not that I got work because of him. My father did not do a film for me or launched me, he wanted us to do things on our own," Javed said.

"Rather I never thought I will enter the film industry, it happened all by chance. Destiny played a part and brought me here in this industry," he said.

I have played a variety of roles, from negative to positive, but I have penchant for comedy.

"I like to play all kind of roles. Comedy is my soft spot. But I love doing action, thriller, drama and negative (roles). I am not comfortable with sexually intimate scenes," he said.

When I asked about his career Javed Jaffrey said that "All was just by chance as he got the role in *Meri Jung*." When he asked his father Jagdeep he replied this is up to you if you want to do this go ahead and do it but do it with perfection. Thus started acting career my life. "There are a lot

of things which inspired me very much." Asked about choreography he said that my inspiration came from the Hollywood dancing stars of 1940. They were Fred Astaire, Gene Kelley, and the contemporary John Travolta, Michael Jackson and of course Indian classical dancers. I practiced all of them to create my own style and thus my passion grew more and more. My main motive is always to entertain in a unique way. You build a web of your audience which sticks around you and loves you but all this happens naturally and automatically."

Javed is an actor, dancer and comedian and did role of a villain also. So how do you balance with all these shades of acting? He said it was possible because an actor has his or her data bank. He minutely observes all the daily life and general activities

of different people from different walks of life. This is his way of understanding life and this gives him deep insight into value of life. He himself went to slum areas to observe the common man. How he walks, speaks, his whole body language is my main institution of learning. When any particular role is offered to him his data bank opens and he naturally switches to that particular character. Your voice plays a very important part. You express the gestures in your own way. When I do mimicry, my voice plays a wonderful role. For TV shows I have written jingles, scripts, sung songs and anchored shows and in all the places my voice played a very important role. He said people say that my image was created by Subhash Ghai. It was attractive, suave, fun and yet snake-like. The character was way before its time. It became a precursor to the 'cool dude on bike' characters that you see in films today."

In the film, *Bombay Boys* you have performed in the song 'Mumbai' which was co-written and choreographed by you.

THE FIRST

This made you to stand first among the dancers. What is your message to the youth. "I just want to say that never ever forget your family values and always pay respect to your parents and all your seniors as this crafts the true artist within you. Then you can achieve your ultimate goal. We did new things as people say on TV. So, we convert this as oye and I Indianise certain things by wearing kurta, salwar on TV shows.

After having hit the screen with his 'devilish dude' act in Subhash Ghai's *Meri Jung* in the 1985, he did a villain's role in Anurag Kashyap's *Besharam* 2013, opposite Ranbir Kapoor. Besides that he has done Faisal Haider's *War Chod Na Yaar* (a satire on Indo-Pak war) and Sameer's *Joe B Carvalho*, another spoofy comedy with Arshad Warsi and Soha Ali Khan. While his funny-man image precedes him, Javed insists that he's serious by temperament.

That explains why he chose to produce the National award-winning documentaries *Inshallah, Kashmir* (2012) and *Inshallah Football* (2010) both directed by Ashwin Kumar.

"We associate Kashmir with terrorism and militancy. And here was a subject, based in the valley, which spoke of hope and football," he says about *Inshallah Football*. "Inshallah Kashmir was about what people actually want. It zoomed in on the reality without a filter, he says no one's clean, neither the Government, nor the military or the police.

THE PANACHE

He traces his panache for entertaining to his university days. "It became a training ground for me. Fashion shows, comedies stand-up... I did it all," he grins. "Antisocial elements from Mahim, Dharavi, Bandra East would hang around. On the annual day I'd be hosting fashion shows while they'd be waiting to throw eggs, even crow's eggs at girls who had rejected them. To avoid that, I'd make the 'bhais' in charge of security! They had to be well behaved then." He adds, "I wasn't a macho guy. I was the funny guy who'd always be cracking jokes. I could never tell a girl, 'You have beautiful eyes'. I'd prefer hanging around in a group rather than sitting in a corner with a girl.

Sometimes the girl would plead for attention. My friends smoked, drank, did pot, hashish, brown sugar but I never touched it. I was not the wild, wild guy. I was the fun guy..."

Javed Jaffrey sharing his personal life and his relationship with his father said, "I still hate it. But as I grew up I learnt to respect my father. His life's an inspiration. He came to Mumbai after the Partition. He lived on the streets with my grandma. He was eight or nine when he worked in BR Chopra's *Afsana* (1951) as a child actor." He adds, "My father believed work is pooja. He disliked wasting producer's time. He'd never entertain journalists on the set. Rather he'd observe the proceedings even if he wasn't required for a shot."



Javed, who was initially perturbed when his father chose to marry a second time (Sugra is Jagdeep's first wife and Javed's mother), has now reconciled to the fact. Rather he defends his father, "Marriage is a delicate relationship, something I understood after I got married. What happens between two people behind closed doors is something no one can understand, not even the children. My father has only got married again! He didn't sleep around or have mistresses. Rather he gave respect to the woman he was involved with," he says adding, "We have a cordial relationship with him and the family. My stepsister Muskaan is six months older to my son Mizaan." Javed says he's an easygoing father. "I make it a point to communicate with my children. Meezaan, is 21, is interested in film-making and doing a degree in film-making in USA. My daughter Alviya has just completed her 12th and is going to study business in the USA. While the youngest Abbas is in standard 8th."

Three decades in showbiz have given him a perspective. "You've got to understand that *yahan sabhi chadhte suraj ko salam karte hain*. Accept it, don't grudge it. Though you may not get your due in terms of money or roles, you'll surely get it in terms of respect," he adds candidly.

We

I love you the more in that I believe you had liked me for my own sake and for nothing else. – John Keats

REMOVING LOVE FROM DUSTBIN

Relationships need to be nurtured with love and patience.

By Shamita Prabhu

Wiping the tears uninhibited flowing from her swollen eyes, Asha was not sure as to how to deal with the situation. At least, she knew he was safe, which was something. Taking deep breaths, she decided she should be calm and collected if things needed to work out.

Asha prowled the two bedroom flat that she owned with Amay, her husband, dogged by worry. She felt the two-bedroom flat was closing it on her, being on her own for three days. His was everywhere. They had had a fight, one of many, at the end of which his eyes firm and resolved, he had declared, "This is no way to live. Whatever I do is not good enough. He added tiredly," "I guess it is time to call it quits. I am moving out."

"But", she had besieged with pleading eyes, "you cannot do this. We are married and belong together."

He had shrugged his shoulders and sneered, "Why not go back to the luxurious life you have been used to with your father, the rich business tycoon. I seem to have failed where he had succeeded," he concluded. Looking at seething frustration mirrored in his eyes, she had had an aching notion of what was coming next.

"I will set the divorce process in motion. You will get all the freedom you seek."

Wildly, feeling out of depth, not caring that she was begging, she had declared, "It will not be easy for me in my community, you know that. What will Pa say to his brothers and cousins."

It seemed she had said the wrong thing. Angered beyond words, swiftly, he tossed his belongings, most of it, into the two suitcases that both had lovingly selected for their honeymoon two years back. He then shut the lid with a snap. Asha had the feeling that he was not only shutting the bag but also shutting her out from his world, his emotions and feelings, dis-

"Tell your Pa that his pampered daughter made a big mistake. Goodbye darling. May you live to experience all the luxuries that life throws at you."



Rajesh na

entangling her from the innermost crevices of his heart. As he shut the front door with a bang, he had ground out, "Tell your Pa that his pampered daughter made a big mistake. Goodbye darling. May you live to experience all the luxuries that life throws at you."

Stunned beyond words, Asha had sat down. There had been a tone of finality in his voice, which even she could not deny.

The next two days had gone in a haze, with Asha longing to be back in Amay's arms, her mind running riot with ways to mend fences with him. Also, she was constantly nagged by a worry regarding his whereabouts as there was no phone call or a message from him.

Asha chewed her lower lip wondering how her parents would react to her plight. Amay and Asha had married against the wishes of their families, as both hailed from different communities and castes. They had assailed their parents to give their blessing arguing that such a school of thought did not hold water with the advent of education changing perceptions and milieu. Asha could now envisage her father, sitting on the huge plush sofa in their house, like a priest giving a holy sermon, enumerating the reasons why he had been against the union, and how difficult it would be for her to move about in the community.

She heard a beep of a message coming and heart racing ran into her bedroom. Perhaps, he was seeing things in a different light now and wanted to sort things out. Breathing fast, with her

heart in her eyes, full of hope, she opened the message, but what she read left her shattered. Amay wanted a divorce citing incompatible differences as the reason for initiating it. He declared that he would be setting off the process in a few days, and within a few months it would come through.

Asha could not believe it. Her first reaction was how could he? The scumbag, could not even wait until he had spoken to her. Still angry, she paced the floor wondering if she should contact her Pa. She knew if she involved him, it would be the beginning of the end as

First, she wrote a message to Amay stating that five years of togetherness warranted at least three to four months of soul-searching, mourning before a definite burial.

Pa would bend backwards to flog his hide. No, that was not an option. Recently, even though they fought regularly, one thing she had been sure of was the sincerity of his intentions. Amay, a software professional, slogged from morning to evening and this had left very little time for any communication or demonstration of affection, but he had periodically declared that he wanted to see her happy and was slogging so that one day, they might see a better dawn of a shared contented future. She knew she could not give

up this dream of his without a fight.

Wiping the tears uninhibited flowing from her swollen eyes, Asha was not sure as to how to deal with the situation. At least, she knew he was safe, which was something. Taking deep breaths, she decided she should be calm and collected if things needed to work out. Absently, she headed for the kitchen, when pangs of hunger started gnawing at her. Washing her hands in the kitchen sink and wiping them clean, she was about to turn to the fridge, when she spotted her potted rose plant on the window sill. She had found it dying on the roadside during her regular morning walks about a month back and had brought it back. Potting it, adding a little manure, she had watered the plant every day. The wilted plant had now blossomed with leaves and even a rosebud was visible. Was not the plant trying to pass a message on to us about the secrets of a happy marriage, she reflected. When nurtured with unconditional love, which acted as its root, unconditional trust that took the form of manure, and patience acting as water, the tree of life should surely blossom into a beautiful tree bearing flowers that filled our lives with colour and vivacity and fruits of happiness and shared contentment. As if working out a difficult crossword puzzle, she analysed, it just took a few right moves to share the rainbow of happiness after a spell of heavy rains of besieged problems. There was a secret key and she just needed to open it.

She decided against

informing her parents as they would be unnecessarily worried. She made up her mind and, with renewed vigour, she raided the fridge to fix herself a sandwich. Munching on it, she jotted down the good and bad points of their marriage. Finally, she drew conclusions on ways to overcome them. She realised that the main culprit was money and time, both of which they never seemed to have enough of. Life had become a toil, so they could not enjoy the small comforts that bring happiness. The only solution was to start on her own but getting capital was a problem. She could not ask her father as Amay would object. Tapping her pen on the pad she reflected wryly, surely there was a way out. She had an idea which had her smiling and clapping her hands in glee. Of course, why else had she struggled all these years for her journalism degree? It should act as her saviour. There were a lot of publishing houses which encouraged fresh talent. She just had to tap into her potential for this to materialise.

First, she wrote a message to Amay stating that five years of togetherness warranted at least three to four months of soul-searching, mourning before a definite burial. Closing her eyes, praying he would relent, she pressed the send button. There was no response thankfully from the other end and Asha decided that he must be already on the road of the much-needed soul-searching spree as suggested.

In the ensuing days, Asha worked laboriously and assiduously like a dog,

spending a lot of time poring over lectures and notes on novel writing, its dos and don'ts. A definite time table was charted out dividing time for hard work as well as rest. She had seen enough of Amay's struggles not to be stupid enough to work relentlessly without rest.

A 15-day period of relentless, diligent hard work delving into her potential resulted in a novel written to her satisfaction. In fact, she had jotted down the story of her life, their personal struggles, going through the highs and lows of it in agonising detail, emotionally reliving the experience. Many a time, her eyes brimmed with remembered, shared and cherished moments, but she ploughed on. Finally, with dreams of unconditional and unending love in her eyes, she concluded the novel on a positive note.

Now, what was left was publishing her work. Calling her college professor, a leading publication owner, she explained her situation and requested him to consider her work for publication. He had previously lauded many of her efforts during college and his response was immediate and encouraging. He declared, "There is nothing more fulfilling for an author than a book, changing a person's perception. You have immense talent. Send in your manuscript. We will see what can be done." His parting shot was humorous wishing her success and a declaration of sending her back to college again if she did not fare well.

She posted her work and rubbing her hands together decided to wait for the

verdict. After an agonising wait of 10 days, when she had almost decided not to wait anymore as it would surely land her in the psychological ward of the local hospital, there was a call. It was the publishing house informing that they liked her work and, except for a few changes here and there, it could be edited and published right away. Asha was euphoric. Her first instinct was to share it with Amay but introspection led to deciding against it. It was not only a man's prerogative to make dreams come true but a woman's too and she needed to work towards it.

This took another 15 to 20 days, but the end result was a cheque and a book ready to be on the shelf in 2-3 days.

The feeling of achievement always brings with it a different kind of joy and contentment and Asha's case was no different. Drumming her fingers on her study desk, she wondered if she should let Amay know or wait longer. What if he no longer cared for her as he had done before and wanted to finish the marriage and

She reflected sadly that she had to give him the chance if he wanted things differently. So, with trembling fingers she took her phone to make a call when there was a beep of a message coming in. It was from Amay.

move on. If this was the case, she knew she would bleed inside as he was like the vital breath of her body, without which she would be dead.

She reflected sadly that she had to give him the chance if he wanted things differently. So, with trembling fingers she took her phone to make a call when there was a beep of a message coming in. It was from Amay. Knowing not what to expect, with her heartbeat thundering in her ears, Asha read on. He said "I was egoistic enough to think that money and status are key ingredients to a better life. It took reading of a book to change my perception. Now I realise that patience,

sacrifice and unconditional love make the journey beautiful. I am sorry for all the pain I have caused. Do give me another chance. Waiting at the door. If you do not open, I know I deserve it and accepting my mistake I will wait until you do so. By the time she finished the message, Asha was in tears, tears of longing, of joy, of hope and fulfilment. She ran and flung open the door. There stood a nervous and uncertain man tiredness etched on his face of going through the same pain of separation that she had gone through. She was engulfed in a hug so tight that it left no doubt of his affection and love. Shared emotions were revisited to their heart's content. Finally, when Asha was able to squirm enough to see his face, she enquired, 'Which book was it that you had read?' Her's was not on the shelf yet, so there was no way he could read it. With a promise of unconditional love forever reflecting in his eyes he said 'Is commitment and love a commodity, by Asha Amay Prabhu. Your professor had mailed me a copy two days back.' They went inside closing the door on misunderstandings and hatred. Eyes twinkling, Asha concluded that she had indeed proved her Pa and the whole conservative community wrong. Education did enhance perceptions on marriage and life as a whole and perhaps, someday, sitting on a plush sofa, like a priest giving a sermon, she would preach this to all of them.

We

She ran and flung open the door. There stood a nervous and uncertain man tiredness etched on his face of going through the same pain of separation that she had gone through. She was engulfed in a hug so tight that it left no doubt of his affection and love.



Rajesh na

All our dreams can come true, if we have the courage to pursue them. — Walt Disney

Does eating vegetarian food guarantee you'll eat healthier?

Considering the variety of vegetarian eating plans, you're likely to eat healthier just by virtue of the foods that you'll mainly eat. However, if you eat lots of cheese, full-fat dairy foods, and sweets, you will not see your health improve.

Recently I was given a vintage wooden rolling pin, but it's so sticky that I can't use it. Any suggestions on how to clean it?

Yes, first soak it in hot water with a couple of drops of grease-cutting dish detergent for just 3-4 minutes to loosen the gunk. Next, mix a thick paste of 3 tablespoon of salt and 1 tablespoon of vinegar to cut through the grease. Rub it up and down over the rolling pin, going with the grain of the wood. Rinse well and let dry for at least 24 hours. To prevent this from happening in the future, dust the pin with flour when rolling out dough. This will stop the oil in your recipe's shortening or butter from being absorbed into the wood.

I have been a non-vegetarian all through my life. Now, I want to stop eating meat. What can take the place of meat? How do I stop missing meat?

One reason you may miss meat is habit. "If your meal planning has a 'where's the meat?' focus, start with planning the meal you'll prepare". The reason people enjoy cooked meat is umami, considered the fifth taste, but meat is not the only source. To get your umami fix, try eating roasted vegetables, mushrooms, avocado, nuts, soy sauce and/or cheese.



Is there a way to make latkes (potato pancakes) ahead and keep them crisp, when we are expecting some guests?

Yes; here's how we can do so. Make pancakes a few hours before your celebration. Layer them between paper towels, and store at room temperature. Just before guests arrive, preheat your oven to 450 degrees F. Place a cooling rack over a cookie sheet. Arrange pancakes about an inch apart on rack. Pop them in the oven and bake 10 minutes or until heated through and crispy.

Please tell us what all to look out for while buying 'pears'. What is the best way to store them after ripening?

The best way to check for ripeness is to gently press your thumb near the stem. If the fruit gives a little, it's good to buy. Under-ripe pears will begin to ripen at room temperature, and you can speed up the process by sticking them in a paper bag. Once ripe, store them in the refrigerator for up to 5 days. When you need pears to hold their shape in a recipe, choose firmer varieties. Softer varieties are better for snacking, smoothies or butters. Warming flavours like ginger, garlic and thyme bring out the savoury side of pears.

How can we cook "wild rice" for salads?

First wash the rice in hot water, swish around a few times. Washing wild rice removes any dust or debris. Just like pasta, you can cook wild rice to your preferred doneness (place rice,

water and salt in a large saucepan and cook covered for about 45-50 minutes or until rice is tender) for a salad we aimed for al dente, drain well. The wild rice has a good, toothy bite but is porous enough to soak up the dressing as it sits. When wild rice is cooked longer, it begins to split, revealing the white, tender insides.

What is meant by "high voltage eating"?

Food is like gasoline: quality, quantity and frequency all matter. Feed your body junk- and you'll feel like junk. Your winning combo: meals and snacks that are a balance of protein, fibre and healthy fats, which keep you energized by steadying your blood sugar. Eat every 4-5 hours to avoid dips in blood sugar and energy. Some examples of energy stars are spinach, red bell pepper and avocado.

The most time-consuming part of Italian recipes is "pitting the olives." Can we buy pitted ones, or how can we pit them easily at home?

We can buy pitted olives but it's worth the effort. Olives sold with pits are meatier and chewier than pitted. To pit olives, place on a cutting board and crush, one at a

time, with the side of a chef's knife, then pull the olive pieces from the pit.

In the summer season, we all love to eat ice cream. But we find some other cold desserts too in the market which look like ice cream eg. 'gelato'. Please tell us the difference between the two, if any?

Yes, there is a difference between the two. Made with milk, cream, sugar and often egg yolks to create a rich custard, ice cream is churned quickly to introduce air, making it light and fluffy. Gelato begins with a similar base but has a higher ratio of milk and less cream and eggs (if any) than ice cream. It is churned slower and with less air, making it denser, and is served at a warmer temperature. This gives the Italian dessert a silkier texture, and its low fat ratio lends it a stronger flavour than ice cream.

What will be the expiry date for cooked and uncooked eggs, as most of them come by only the "sell by" date?

Refrigerated, uncooked eggs stay fresh for up to three weeks after the "sell by" date. Most eggs are spritzed with mineral oil, which seals the porous shell and makes it less susceptible to bacteria. Since cooking washes away this protective coating, you must consume hard-boiled (even refrigerated ones) eggs within a week. — Savita Bhargava.



Having an orgasm is already pretty great but there's plenty of ways you can ramp things up between the sheets. There are a number of simple adjustments you can make to your sex life that might make orgasms easier to achieve and more intense when you have them. Give these tricks a whirl to add a little extra zip to the Big O.

Get rid of distractions: It's important to be in the moment. You don't want to risk being distracted and have it ruin the build-up, especially considering how delicate the moment is. Switch off your phone or leave it in another room and turn off the lights if it makes you more comfortable and less self-conscious.

Explosive Sex

Simple ways to make your orgasm bigger. By Suman Bajpai

Add more stimulation: A dose of self-stimulation will help keep your circulation healthy and your mind primed for sex. You will feel more in tune with your body's own needs and desires, and you'll be more prepared for sex with your partner. A combination of things can help turn you on and get you closer to climaxing, rather than sticking to one single move. Like having your neck/breasts stimulated during sex, or going in for some double action by including his hands when he goes down on you.

Create a slow burn: Instead of trying to get in the mood in a few minutes flat, keep a slow burn going all day long so that you can heighten your desire and intensify your sexual pleasure. Do so by fantasising, swapping sexy texts, and tantalising each other with flirtatious strokes and kisses all day long.

Delay the pleasure: Remember that the longer the build-up, the bigger the explosion – so try and delay it as much as you can. Create tension – when you're getting close back off/slow down and then build it back up. Do this as many times as you can for a more intense payoff in the end. The longer the arousal build-up, the bigger the explosion.

Do kegels: Kegel exercises strengthen the pelvic floor as well as muscles in the vagina, bladder and uterus. There are loads of advantages to doing kegel exercises regularly, but you can say that stronger vaginal muscles lead to bigger and more intense orgasms is all the motivation you need! It's the ultimate exercise to transform those so-so orgasms to fabulous ones. Isolate the muscles you use to stop and start your urine flow, and then clench and release them throughout the day. You can do them throughout boring meetings or when you are stuck in traffic – anywhere, anytime!

Masturbate: How can you tell your partner what you want if you don't know exactly how your equipment

works? Take lots of time to experiment on your own, with different tools (your fingers, toys, etc) and in different situations (in bed, in the shower, and so on). Even have a go at it at different times of the day. You can use sex aids also. Sex aids can be a great way to increase your sexual response and pleasure, and many women report positive benefits from sex-toy use.

Have more sex!: Believe it or not, ladies, but the more sex you have, the better it will get. Orgasm frequency and intensity seem to have a direct relationship. So grab your man and get down and dirty as often as you can – all those future orgasms will be totally worth it! Choose the correct position. A position that creates plenty of friction during sex will help you orgasm. That's why being on top helps, because the top of your clitoris is rubbed. You can also try lying on your back with a pillow below your butt so it rubs against his pubic bone.

A 2014 study from the University of Albany found that "orgasm frequency was highly correlated ... with orgasm intensity." So, potentially, the more you have sex, the better it will get. And the better it gets, the more you'll want to have it.

It's good to talk: They say talk is cheap. It's not cheap: in the bedroom it's free, and the freer you are with how you talk during sex, the less inhibited you'll feel and, as a result, the better your orgasm will be. We're not just talking about dirty talk either, though that's great too. Tell your partner what feels really good. There's no harm in saying what you want out loud—doesn't ask, doesn't get. Men really want direction. Let your partner know when he's on the right track, either by telling him what feels great or by moaning.

Erotic friction: Enjoying erotica together or alone – porn, literature and anything between – is a great way to learn your own preferences and tastes to better begin exploring them. With a partner, sharing



A DOSE OF SELF-STIMULATION WILL HELP KEEP YOUR CIRCULATION HEALTHY AND YOUR MIND PRIMED FOR SEX. YOU WILL FEEL MORE IN TUNE WITH YOUR BODY'S OWN NEEDS AND DESIRES, AND YOU'LL BE MORE PREPARED FOR SEX WITH YOUR PARTNER.

fantasies, even if they remain unexplored, can lead to the shedding of self-consciousness and embarrassment, and encourage orgasms without limits. As with so much in sex, this is all about open and honest communication, and that takes practice. It's worth it.

Stop faking: Faking it (for women and men) can come from a good place; you don't want to hurt your partner's feelings. However, it's still dishonesty, and can ultimately be destructive to the trust in your relationship. In terms of taking ownership of achieving orgasms, faking it only serves to reinforce moves that clearly aren't doing it for you.

We

Love isn't something you find. Love is something that finds you.

A PLEASANT SURPRISE

A pleasant surprise that marked the beginning of a beautiful friendship. By Shiny Babu

Mr Sundar was as promising as he appeared to be on the first day. What was once a dreadful nightmare now transformed into a very delightful experience by the sheer magic of his presence and the way he related to the students. Thus, they grew to adore him.

Tidhya! Today we are getting a new Maths and Physics teacher," exclaimed Nalini. "I hope he is good, if not it will be like 'out of the frying pan into the fire'," said Vidhya chuckling.

They both were studying in the 9th grade in one of the elite schools in Chennai. Their teachers were good for most of the subjects except for Maths and Physics. Mr Mathew taught both the subjects and was good at singing a lullaby. While the intelligent students found him wanting, the poor students found him musical and slept in his class. Finally it was a relief that he was moving out of the city, hence out of their lives.

The students assembled in the classroom awaiting the arrival of the new teacher with bated breath. Finally, he entered the classroom. Mr Sundar was a six footer with a very appealing personality. The classroom lit up when he smiled. He introduced himself and started talking to them as though he had known them for years. His first class was Physics and he started with Archimedes' principle.

"Does anyone know his story?" he asked and quite a few hands went up.

Vidhya was chosen to narrate it and he corrected her in a few places.

This was followed by a few experiments done by the students themselves and at the end of the lesson, even the most dull one wanted the class not to end. Vidhya was

elated. She realised she had found the touchstone for which she had been waiting for so long. When she went back home she was very excited.

"Vidhya! How is your new teacher?" asked her father.

"Papa! I hope you are not getting transferred for at least another 3 years. I want to remain in this school for the sake of this teacher," she said excitedly.

"I hope I will remain here for your sake," smiled her father Vasu.

He held a top position in a foreign bank. He adored his children Vidhya and Vinay. Vidhya's mother was an Ophthalmologist and the family had a busy life. Despite their busy schedule, both parents devoted time for their children. Vinay was in the 7th grade and was even more brilliant than Vidhya. As they were talking, her mother Vimala came in. Vidhya rushed to hug her.

"I heard your conversation with papa. I hope you are going to love Maths now and perform brilliantly," she said.

"That is a promise," smiled Vidhya.

Days passed. Mr Sundar was as promising as he appeared to be on the first day. What was once a dreadful nightmare now transformed into a very delightful experience by the sheer magic of his presence and the way he related to the students. Thus, they grew to adore him.

He would tell them, "Life is not only Maths and Physics. Let us add some spice to it."

Once a week for an hour, he would stop teaching and would instead read to them articles from the *Reader's Digest*, stories from *Chicken Soup for the Soul* etc. They would discuss life's problems, each one getting a chance to narrate their unique experiences. The students valued and loved these sessions. These sessions were shaping them to be better human beings. Sundar was becoming a legend.

Years rolled by. Vidhya was in her 12th grade. Her natural aptitude for these subjects was enhanced by his teaching. Finally the exams were over and results were published. She stood second in India and first in the state in the ISC exams. She was recognised and appreciated for her accolades and in one of her interviews she said,

"I have scored the highest in Maths and Physics and I owe it entirely to Mr Sundar. He has had a tremendous influence in my academic performances. But more than our academic success, we have developed great values thanks to his efforts."

As though waiting for her to finish schooling, her father was posted to Mumbai. She joined St Xavier's college and graduated in Maths and Economics. She wrote regularly to her favourite

teacher. He showed keen interest in her educational pursuits. Time flew by. She got very busy and her letters to her mentor became infrequent but she always cherished his memory. She joined the prestigious IIM Ahmedabad. There she met Mohan who swept her off her feet. While she was brilliant, he was outstandingly brilliant. Tall, handsome with a calm disposition, he was the favourite of the professors and all the girls longed to interact with him. He was a very private person and all that she could gather was that he belonged to a middle-class family and his father was a teacher.

They happened to be in the same team for a project and that brought them very close. He gradually opened up and despite his efforts to hide his emotions, she could sense his interest in her. They spent a lot of time with each other in close proximity and developed a great respect for each other. She was waiting for him to propose even though she wouldn't have minded doing it herself. However, she didn't have to wait for long.

One evening, he approached her. "Vidhya! I need to tell you something important and am trying to muster the courage to do so," he started.

"Well! I am waiting for you to ask," she said.

"How do you know that I want to ask you something?" he quizzed.

"Can you come with me for dinner?" he added.

"Is that all? I was expecting something much more serious," said Vidhya.

He smiled shyly. "Maybe

in the course of dinner, I might have asked you what you have been wanting to hear."

"You might as well tell me now. I can't stand the suspense," she said.

"Will you marry me?" he blurted out. His face had turned red, he was as shy as a girl.

"I thought you would never ask. I decided to wait for a week and propose to you myself," she laughed joyously.

"Does it mean it is a yes?", asked Mohan.

"You dumbo! Can't you still understand?" Vidhya hugged him.

"I was and I still am, worried, though. Status is

"I was and I still am, worried, though. Status is the biggest gulf between us. You know that we belong to the middle class and I am concerned as to how your parents would react," Mohan sounded anxious.

the biggest gulf between us. You know that we belong to the middle class and I am concerned as to how your parents would react," Mohan sounded anxious.

"Mr Mohan MBA! We both have our jobs in Mumbai itself. You are so very well placed as far as your career is concerned; My parents cannot possibly have any objection. Moreover, they care more about the kind of person you are. You can definitely win them over with your personality and your intelligence," she assured him with pride.

That night her father approached her.

"Vidhya! I am asking you directly. Mamma and I want you to get married. We have given you all the education you wanted. Now it is time to settle down in life. If you have anyone in mind, let us know," said her father.

"Papa! In fact, I meant to talk to you. There is a guy called Mohan in my class. He is super brilliant. He has already got an offer with McKinsey. We both really love each other. He is a wonderful person. Papa, the only hitch is ... he comes from a middle-class family. His father is a retired teacher. Hope that is not a problem with you and mamma," said Vidhya.

"Vidhya! You know our sense of values. We came up the hard way. I value such people," said her father.

Vidhya thanked her stars for having such parents.

Mohan broke the news to his father when he went down to Chennai.

"Will you marry me?" he blurted out. His face had turned red, he was as shy as a girl. "I thought you would never ask. I decided to wait for a week and propose to you myself," she laughed joyously.





"Hi Vidhya! Meet my dad," said Mohan smiling sheepishly. Sundar smiled. "Vidhya! My child, we are meeting after ages. You have indeed grown to be a beautiful woman. It is no wonder that my son was bewitched."

"So her name is Vidhya? Is her father's name Vasudevan?", asked his father Sundar.

"Appa, do you know them?" asked Mohan.

"I taught one girl named Vidhya who used to send e-mails to me regularly until she joined IIM Ahmedabad. Her mails became infrequent after that. Maybe she got busy," said his father.

Mohan showed him her photo and Sundar was delighted.

"Mohan! This child is a wonderful human being as well. I am very happy for you," said Sundar.

"Appa! you have been a father and mother to me after amma's demise. I want you to be happy and want to marry someone who will value and respect you."

"Anyways, don't disclose to Vidhya that you are my son. I want to surprise her," said Sundar.

"We need to make a trip next week to Mumbai to meet them," said Mohan.

The next day, Sundar

received an e-mail from Vidhya conveying the happy news that she has found her life partner. She described Mohan in detail and even mentioned his father who is a retired teacher. Sundar smiled to himself and wrote back a mail congratulating her. He called Vidhya's father and spoke to him after announcing his identity. Vasu was delighted to know that his daughter's mentor will now become her father-in-law. Sundar requested him not to tell Vidhya and sought permission to visit them unannounced.

The next week, father and son arrived at Vidhya's place. Her father Vasu and

"Appa! you have been a father and mother to me after amma's demise. I want you to be happy and want to marry someone who will value and respect you."

mother Vimala were pleased to meet Sundar, the much-cherished *guru* of their daughter. Vidhya was out and was expected soon. They were catching up with all the news and Mohan could sense that Vidhya's parents were silently judging their prospective son-in-law. Just then Vidhya walked in. Sundar had his back to her and when she saw Mohan, she knew it was his dad along with him.

"Come Vidhya! They are waiting for you," said Vasu.

He sounded very happy. Vidhya came in and when she saw Sundar, she was too stunned even to react.

"Hi Vidhya! Meet my dad," said Mohan smiling sheepishly.

Sundar smiled. "Vidhya! My child, we are meeting after ages. You have indeed grown to be a beautiful woman. It is no wonder that my son was bewitched."

When Vidhya could finally find her legs, she rushed to her favourite master and touched his feet. Sundar

hugged her.

"This is the proudest moment of my life. My most favourite student will soon be my favourite daughter. What more can I ask of life?" his eyes were filled with tears.

"I just can't believe this. Mohan never told me that you are his father nor did it occur to me to ask him for the details. I am so overwhelmed to know that someone who played a big role in shaping me will continue to do so all my life. I feel so blessed," She was openly crying.

"We are so honoured to have your son as our son-in-law and to welcome you into the family as a close kin. Our daughter can't be more fortunate," said Vasu holding Sundar's hands.

Mohan and Vidhya stood side by side, overwhelmed on watching a beautiful relationship unfold in front of them.

There is only one happiness in this life, to love and be loved. — George Sand

CROSS WORD

CONTEST

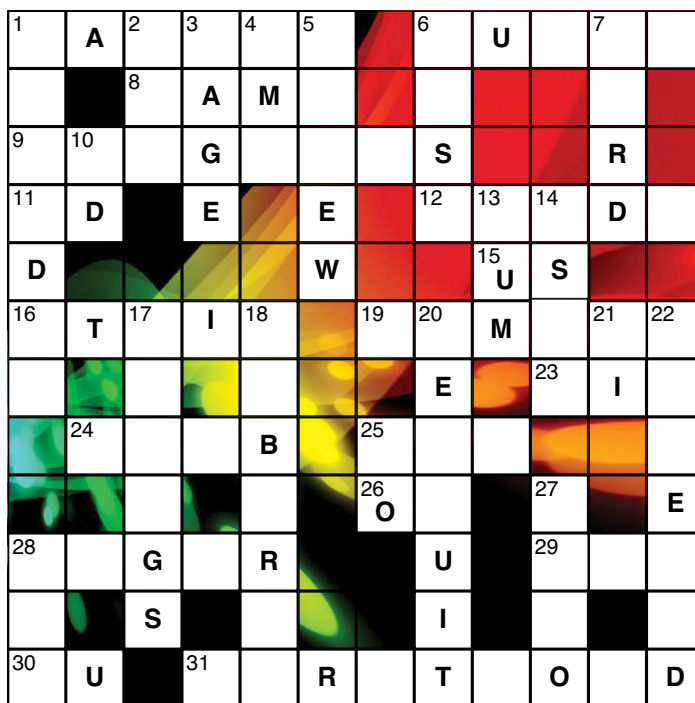
143

Across

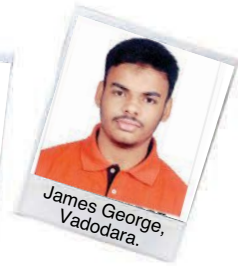
1. A crisp pinroll-shaped bread roll. (6)
6. Frill on a garment. (5)
8. You are called by it. (4)
9. These keep your lower extremities cosy. (8)
11. Who you are! (2)
12. Exchange. (2)
15. We all. (6)
16. A store room? (5)
19. A county town in northern Ireland. (6)
23. You are this in a foreign land. (3)
24. A sting. (4)
25. Cricketers are familiar with this. (3)
26. Choice-giving word. (2)
28. Large cat. (5)
29. Fault. (3)
30. UK left this. (2)
31. A university in Virginia. (9)

Down

1. An Indian poet of yore. (7)
2. Present participle of verb. (3)
3. A wise person. (4)
4. Loan payback. (3)
5. To make like before. (5)
6. Iron can do this. (4)
7. Cow group? (7)
10. Publication head? (2)
13. Funny, odd (slang). (3)
14. Quickly. (4)
17. Sharp vibrating sounds. (6)
18. Dance shows. (7)
20. Take in for work. (7)
21. Geographical indication or describing joe? (2)
22. Floated overhead. (7)
25. Not a nice smell to have. (2)
27. Disagreement vote. (4)
28. It goes around the neck. (3)



Rules and Regulations: ● Entries must be written on the crossword printed here. Photocopies will not be accepted. ● Should reach *Woman's Era* by **30 September 2016**, by ordinary post. No correspondence in this matter will be entertained. ● The contest is not open to the employees of Delhi Press. Every entry should be accompanied by the sender's family photo. Please send a signed declaration that you have no objection to printing your family picture.



Answers to Crossword-141

Across. 1. Soprano, 7. Till, 10. Aura, 11. Orb, 12. Odd, 14. Toe, 15. Druid, 16. Glue, 18. Dc, 19. Ao, 20. Ai, 22. Nosed, 24. Old, 25. Sat, 27. Sir, 29. Stir, 30. Imp, 32. Re, 33. Tonic, 35. Aye, 36. Ing, 37. Kiss, 38. Needy, 39. Slop,

Down. 1. Sardines, 2. Ou, 3. Proud, 4. Radical, 5.No, 6. Oregano, 8. Interest, 9. Leer, 13. Dd, 17. Loo, 21. Id, 23. Dairy, 24. Orange, 26. Tree, 28. Om, 29. Si, 30. Icky, 31. Push, 33. Tin, 34. One, 35. Ail.

Please accept my entry for the crossword competition.
I subscribe to all the rules and regulations of the competition.

Name
Address
City Pin
Mobile E-mail



SHEA BUTTER

Magic in a jar. By Pushpa Bhatia



Shea butter is an off-white or ivory coloured fat extracted from the nut of the African shea tree. It is one of nature's wonders.

Growing up to 60 feet tall, the shea tree does not flower before it is 20 years old and can live up to 200 years. Shea nuts are traditionally harvested by women, crushed and boiled to extract the shea butter which has exceptional properties.

The shea tree is considered sacred because of the good it can do to the skin and hair. It also has health benefits. Here are its benefits:

Antioxidant qualities: Shea butter consists of many antioxidants such as vitamins A, E and F. If you have wrinkles, fine lines and crows feet or if your skin is dry, damaged or devitalised, shea butter will bring your skin back to life and beauty.

Skin super food and healer: It protects your skin from UV sunlight, harsh climate, dehydration and pollution damage. It strengthens your skin by stimulating the production of collagen which is the youthful scaffolding protein in your skin. Shea butter also speeds up the cell renewal, and is suitable for sensitive skin.

Healing properties: Shea butter is often used as a base in medicinal ointments because of its healing properties. It helps in improving skin discolouration, stretch marks and dark spots, burns, minor cuts, eczema, psoriasis, poisonous plants contact dermatitis. The presence of

vitamin A soothes skin allergies like insect bites.

Baby care: Since shea butter is all natural and so moisturising, it is ideal for baby care. It is natural, gentle and soft for every type of skin but it is specially good for the delicate and sensitive skin of babies.

Shea butter is perfect for after-bath skin care and is a healer in case of eczema and diaper rash.

For muscle fatigue: Shea butter is very beneficial for sportive men and women as it prepares the muscles before the workout and helps them to recover faster, post workout. It also helps to reduce muscle aches as it stimulates the elimination of toxins from the muscles.

Lip care: It provides extra moisture needed during the cold season. Thus, it acts as a perfect lip balm and an effective treatment for chapped lips.

For hair care: Shea butter acts as a revitalising care for your hair. It coats the hair shaft and also protects it from damage caused by chemical hair treatment, blow dryers, straighteners and other hair tools that cause damage to your hair.

For massage purposes: Shea butter can be used as a masseur. Use it in small amounts on the trouble-some area and rub in. The massage is very beneficial in summer.

How to apply: Shea butter is great

for your skin and scalp, but is also great for direct application to your hair. Raw unrefined shea butter is solid, dense and really soft. To apply, put a small amount on the palm of your hands and rub them together. The heat from your hands will cause the shea butter to melt. Then apply it on your hair and scalp.

Different types of shea butter, different qualities

Not all shea butters are made equal when it comes to quality and efficiency. They come in different types, depending on how they have been extracted from the nuts, refined or unrefined.

Refined shea butter has been extracted with a chemical process, which involves bleaching, deodorising and overheating. All of these, deeply altering chemical processes yield a white odourless shea butter that has lost all of its deep moisturising, antiageing protecting and healing properties. This is the type of shea butter that goes into chocolate making.

Unrefined shea butter is extracted manually or mechanically. It has a mild smoky scent and a golden to light ivory colour. The raw or deodorised shea butter is what you want to use, because it has retained all its precious skin, moisturising, antiageing and healing properties. This is the only type of shea butter we carry at natural purity.

We

Problems are not stop signs, they are guidelines. Robert H. Schuller



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Healthy food for healthy eyes

Read what's good for your vision.

By T. Rajagopalan

Have you ever nursed a fond desire to see clearly without spectacles? Wish to browse newspapers without the necessity to squint? If so, you and science see to eye. A research is strenuously working to make the gleam of perfect vision a reality for numerous persons who wear glasses or contact lenses. Already, thousands of people have

been able to trash their spectacles – or have started using them less – thanks to laser eye surgery that corrects nearsightedness. Others are delaying the onset of age-related vision problems by taking antioxidants.

And on the scientific frontier, work is briskly under way on a cure for middle-aged blurring.

VITAMINS THAT KEEP EYES YOUNG

The most exciting prospects keeping your eyes healthy have to do with prevention. Numerous recent studies show that it's quite possible to avoid or slow the pace of development of certain aged-related ailments by taking daily doses of antioxidants. A Harvard study found that people who took 15,000 IU of vitamin A daily, were able to forestall the progress of *retinitis pigmentosa* (a hereditary condition that causes nightblindness in teenagers and often total blindness later in life). If someone with *retinitis pigmentosa* started taking vitamin A at the age of 32, researchers estimate, he or she would still have some vision by 70 whereas, without the supplement, they would be blind by 63.

A number of antioxidant vitamins and minerals may afford a valuable hedge against other kinds of vision loss that often come with age. Research at Brigham and Woman's Hospital in Boston (USA) found that people who took supplements of vitamin A or beta-carotene, vitamin E, vitamin C, zinc, copper and selenium were 17 per cent less likely to develop cataracts, (a very common disease that causes clouding of the lens).

And a study by David A Newsome, clinical professor of ophthalmology at Tulane University School of Medicine, found that when patients with macular degeneration took antioxidant supplements, 30 to 35 per cent showed marked improvement.

In the meantime – albeit a conclusive link between antioxidant supplements and boosted vision has yet to be proved – Newsome and a galaxy of other eye doctors are convinced of the immense benefits of taking daily supplements and prescribing them to their patients. Supplements recommended by Newsome contain 40 mg of zinc oxide, 2 mg of copper, 60 mg of vitamin C, 30 IUs of vitamin E, 5000 IUs of beta-carotene and 40 mg of selenium.

There are varieties of fruits and vegetables intake of which will make

your vision crystal clear obviating the need for any external gadgets like spectacles to wear or contact lenses to be placed inside the eyes.

Firstly, you'll do well to go easy on fatty foods. The principal dietary culprit in harming vision is fat. An intensive research study involving 17,764 men over a period of five-years showed that the fattest were twice as likely to get cataracts as slim people. There are also concerns about the possible nexus between a high-fat diet and macular degeneration. The exceptions are Omega 3 fatty acids (found in fish) and healthy fats (in nuts). These may protect against age-related macular degeneration (ARMD) and benefit the retina.

Lutein and Xanthin offers protection against ARMD by forming pigments in the macula that sharpens the visual images. These pigments help with visions by filtering out hazardous blue light wave lengths. The more pigment, the less likely are you to fall victim to ARMD.

Leafy vegetables and egg yolks are quite rich in lutein and xanthin. Just a teaspoonful with a smidgeon of fat will up your blood lutein by approximately 90 per cent.

Blue and purple berries contain a group of compounds called anthocyanins which attach themselves straight to the rods of the retina, which are responsible for adjusting the eye to see in the dark.

Zinc is found in good measure in red meat, beans, peas, whole grains and wheat germ may also prevent ARMD.

Excellent are carotenoids (contained abundantly) in yellow orange and green vegetables and specially carrots. Children are asked by responsible mothers to consume carrots raw also, for improvement of eye sight. These roots contain



THERE ARE VARIETIES OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES INTAKE OF WHICH WILL MAKE YOUR VISION CRYSTAL CLEAR OBVIATING THE NEED FOR ANY EXTERNAL GADGETS LIKE SPECTACLES TO WEAR OR CONTACT LENSES TO BE PLACED INSIDE THE EYES.

carotene which is converted into vitamin A by the liver. Vitamin A protects the eye by helping to absorb the light energy into it. Increased levels allow your eyes to absorb more energy and help you to see more clearly, especially in the gloom. Very good sources, apart from carrots are mangoes, cabbage, cod liver oil, milk and eggs.

We

Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

BRINGING DOWN YOUR FOOD BILLS

Be innovative.
By Dr Kalpana Sarkar



It is a well-known fact that prices of commodities have skyrocketed in modern times. When my mother was young, *desi ghee* would set back someone by just one rupee per ser (a standard of weight at that time). Years back, tomatoes were being sold for one rupee a kilo in the city. However, the prices are soaring each day – with no respite from inflation in sight. With a huge middle and lower class in the country, the rising prices of food are every woman's nightmare. There are a few basic steps you can take to cut down on the cost of food:

Constantly evaluate competitive prices – We often buy our food and supplies from a fixed vendor, but what one needs to do is keep doors open to other vendors and/or companies. A lot of these reduce their prices to stay competitive in the market. You can make bargain deals if you keep your eyes fixed on good offers.

Track your purchasing trends – It is not uncommon for people to over-purchase. This leads to food spoilage and a waste of money. It is important to understand your usage, and to adjust your buying habits according to them.

Make a list – It is important for you to stick to the shopping list you make. Ask yourself, "Is this item absolutely necessary or can I do without it?" You will be surprised as to how many items will be struck off the list. Buying in bulk can also reduce the price of things.

Change brands – You can experiment with different brands of the same products. Be on the lookout for the product with a cheaper price, while maintaining quality.

Do not shop hungry – Make sure that you do not go to shop without a full stomach. People unconsciously make unnecessary purchases because they are feeling hungry.

Store dry goods properly – To prevent weevil formation, put dry neem leaves inside the jars which contain rice, flour, beans and

pulses. Semolina (*suji*) should be lightly roasted before being stored. Spices will remain fresh for a long time if you store them in the fridge.

Eat seasonal and locally grown foods – If you have a green thumb, you can start your very own kitchen garden. It's not difficult to grow a few herbs on your windowsill if you lack real gardening skills.

Make at home – When I was young, my mother used to make jams, pickles and *papads* at home. Similarly, one can also easily make butter, *ghee*, *paneer* and curd at home. It might be additional work, but you will be able to make large savings with this.

Store perishables effectively – Buy certain vegetables like onions, tomatoes, garlic and ginger in bulk (when cheap). Make a puree out of them and store them in the freezer. Peas can also be shelled and frozen.

Be innovative – Try making gravies without using onions. Instead, try alternatives like tomato puree, curd, desiccated coconut, sunflower seed paste, or even the milk solids left over after making *ghee* at home.

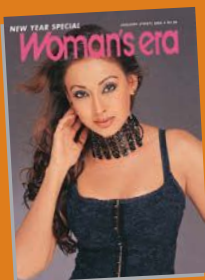
Don't waste food – Try to cook just the right amount of food that is to be consumed. Take small portions when you sit down for meals; you can always take extra helpings. There is no point in helping yourself liberally, not eating the food and then throwing it away.

Recycle leftovers – One can always serve leftovers from one meal in the next one. But, if your family is fussy, you can try a few creative things. For example – *upma* and bread *pakodas* can be made from leftover bread, *choorma* from *chappatis*, stuffed *paranths* and stuffed sandwiches from vegetables and *dals* kneaded into wheat flour; and made into *masala chapattis* or *pooris*.

Exchange ideas with your friends and find out how they manage to cut down their food bills at home. It is not difficult. It just requires a bit of patience and a little hard work.

We

*Happiness resides not in possessions,
and not in gold, happiness dwells in the
soul. – Democritus*



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AS YOU SAY



PM SHOULD TACKLE OTHER ISSUES TOO

Apropos GST-Good or bad editorial August II. It is welcome that the government and the Opposition have found common ground on amending the Constitution to enable the transition from a fragmented set of indirect taxes to a harmonised system of goods and services taxes across the country. As for Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his government, the GST is as significant politically as it is in terms of economic policy. It was interesting to watch recently the debate in the Rajya Sabha which ranged from being witty, vitriolic to sarcastic with P. Chidambaram playing on words.

It is salutary that the government had decided to listen to the Opposition parties, and the Opposition parties in turn are talking about the real issues involving the GST and how they need to be dealt with.

It has also shown that it has the political nous to push through big, game-changing reforms. Perhaps most importantly the signal is that a change in BJP's strategy is being led by PM himself. One sincerely wishes he applies the same strategy on other burning problems too.

– Padmini Raghavendra, Secunderabad.

WHAT'S THE AGE FOR MARRIAGE?



This is with reference to the article *Marriage Taking a Backseat* August II. Marriage is an important part of a man's life and it should take place at the right

age, whatever be the gender. Earlier the better, as the young mind is more flexible and can mould itself easily to the ups and downs of the new family members. Parents are more worried about performing their duties of marriage as it requires lots of energy and sometimes have to compel their children. The couples should both be mentally and physically prepared for marriage and take time to answer the parents, only then can they enter into the married life happily.

Life is enjoyable for a bachelor/spinster within a small circle of parents and siblings, until he or she has the energy to live independently. On becoming a senior citizen and after retirement, killing time becomes a problem and it is at this stage that loneliness crops in, leading to depression. They regret for not obeying their parents and fulfilling their wishes, who had expired by then or are on the verge of it.

Marriage truly requires lots of adjustments from day one, but these adjustments though might seem difficult at that young age, gives a sense of satisfaction at old age to re-

cap. With people to confide in, parents feel happy for completing their duties at the right age, and this is what one needs, at the fag end of the day (life) and it gives a sense of fulfilment.

– Preetha Rengaswamy, Chennai.

IS NUMBER 13 REALLY UNLUCKY?



As I read the short story *Number Three* by Neelam Saxena Chandra (August II) I smiled. Mother's fear of number three being unlucky made me think can a number or a person or anything be lucky or unlucky? I feel lucky or unlucky is all in mind that has no logic or reasoning.

Even In numerology the number three is considered lucky along with nos 1, 6, 9.

I myself was born on the universally considered unlucky number 13. Born on, 13th! When I was born I was not aware of it, neither did my parents believe in numerology nor the luck or lack of it.

Now at 66 looking back at my life I



SIGN OF WOMAN POWER

Refer to the editorial *India at Rio* (WE September I 2016). Wrestler Sakshi

Malik has won first medal –Bronze for India in the 58-kilogram freestyle. P.V. Sindhu has won Silver medal in badminton. The Wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt won Bronze which was converted into Silver.

Sakshi proved her name in reality as she is *Sakshmi* in achieving her goal. Sindhu too proved (Sidh) that Indian sports persons have the potential for winning medals by doing hard work.

The proverb is “There is always a woman behind a man's success” Now, women instead of men are becoming successful. This is a good sign of woman power.

All sports persons who have lost now and new entrants must improve

it further by doing hard work and minutely observing their mistakes and also observing the technique of winning by winners.

With TV and video recordings all sports persons can watch their mistakes during the show if any and learn from winners their art and technique of playing and winning the games.

No doubt, Indians in sports are excelling to their best. They are now worldclass sports person in their own game! That is why they are in Olympics. Even if medals are not won, the hard work by Indian sports person to win deserves much appreciation.

There is lot of money, rupees for crores of winning medals in international sports events like Olympics. So, what our young generation is waiting for? Make a career in sports and let the *Jhanda ocha rahe hamara* – hoist Indian flag at the top in the sports world too.

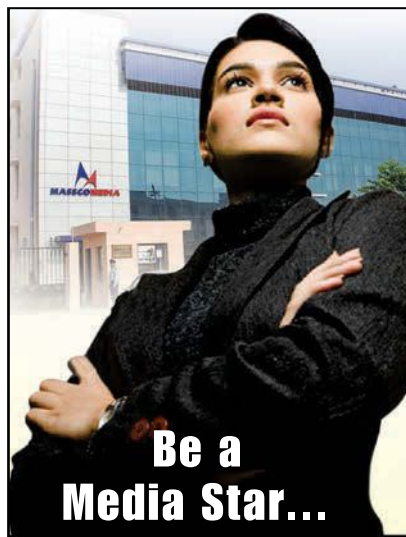
– Mahesh Kumar, New Delhi.

feel that I am blessed in so many ways, in education, in jobs, in marriage and now that I am a proudmother of a son and proud grand mother of my grandson I feel I can't be luckier than this

"Daadi," calls out the little one and that sends me floating on the cloud nine.

For me the number 13 has proved anything but unlucky.

– Urmilla Ramrakhiani, Pune.



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WHY NOT MIXED MARRIAGES?

This is in response to the article *A Discussion on Interracial Marriages* (August 1, 2016) based

on Dr Rashmi Singla's research paper *Intermarried Couples – Mental Health and Psychological Well-Being*. The article focuses on the psychological challenges for the couples of interracial marriages arising out of social disapproval, incompatibility in their cultures and traditions, inability to preserve their ancestral heritage for the next generation, etc. While the challenges remain as they are, the success of mixed marriages proves that the couples are able to overcome the challenges and live happily together ever after.

The mixed marriages enter into such realms of cultural exchange and enrich the couples, which is beyond the expectations one can have from conventional marriages. The hybrid culture that develops at home can amalgamate the best traditions of the two different races the couples belong to. The children may grow up to be truly global citizens rather than remain mired in their respective national identities.

Interracial marriages are becoming more popular in a globalised world with people migrating from one country to another and willing to embrace transnational identities more than ever before. Society has also begun to accept these marriages without reservation.

– Subrata Ray, Hyderabad.

ELECTORAL REFORMS IN INDIA

This has reference to your cover story *Electoral Reforms For Healthy Democracy* (August 2016). Except for Anti-Defection Bill brought in by Rajiv Gandhi in the eighties, no visible and meaningful reforms is made to our Electoral System. Even this anti-defection bill has not served the purpose as expected and is exploited by our power-hungry politicians, taking advantage of some avoidable flaws in the bill.

Time has come for some drastic reforms in the system in the light of some experience. To start with, every year a couple of months should be reserved for holding elections of all sorts to avoid suspending all developmental works in the name of election code of conduct throughout the year. As far as possible election to the state legislature and Parliament should be held together to check expenditure and wastage of manpower.

For one year the kith and kin of deceased people's representative should not be allowed to contest election to stop exploitation of sympathy factor. No one should be allowed to contest from more than one constituency.

The anti-defection law should be further strengthened. Not more than one person should be allowed to contest from a particular family to avoid concentration of power in a single family. Election process should be quick and there should not be long gap between election date and the date of result.

At a time when there is a move to fix minimum educational qualification for driving license, it is high time some high educational qualification is prescribed to contest election to legislature and Parliament.

– Ramanand Sharma, Bangalore.

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